■ Metro / A23

Doña Aurora 'reunites' with President Quezon after 30 years of separation

■ Entertainment / A2-1

ABS-CBN executive on GMA 7 becoming No. 1: We saw it coming

■ World / A12

Michael Jackson's ex-wife to testify at child sex trial

■ Motoring / C2

Providing safer venue for clandestine motorcycle racing

■ 2bU! / D1

Places to visit, things to do in the playground called Earth

If you think April's hot, then watch out for May

By Blanche S. Rivera and Nikko Dizon

IF YOU think April is hot, May will be hot, hot, hotter.

The country will experience hotter days next month, with temperatures

IF YOU/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Wednesday, April 27, 2005 ★★ 80 pages / 9 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 138 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Elton John to marry male, Canadian lover of 11 years

LONDON—Pop singer Elton John will marry his partner of 11 years David Furnish later this year or early next year, his publicist said Monday.

Britain's The Mirror tabloid newspaper reported Monday that John, 58, would marry his 42-year-old Canadian partner before Christmas.

Laws recognizing homosexual civil partnerships come into effect in Britain on Dec. 5.

ELTON/ A8

Palace: All jueteng rumors

Guingona confirmed on time for China leader's 3-day visit

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Volt Contreras and Christine O. Avendaño

CHINESE President Hu Jintao arrived in Manila last night for a three-day state visit aimed at boosting bilateral ties.

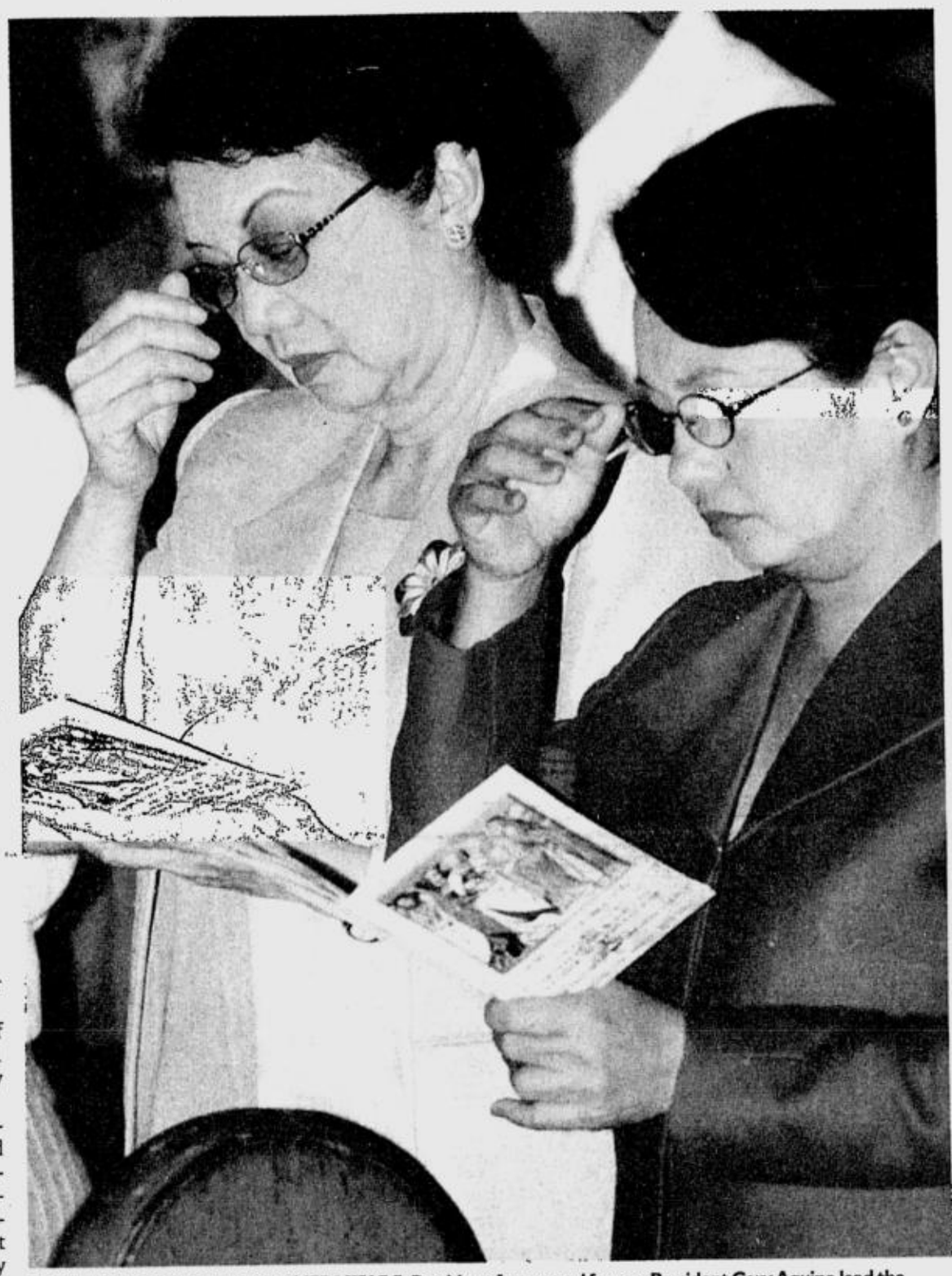
Hu's special flight from Indonesia touched down at 6:34 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport amid tight security. He was accompanied by his wife Liu Yongqing.

Only a few hours earlier, the foreign relations committee of the Commission on Appointments gave its endorsement to former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. in just one hearing.

Guingona's confirmation as the country's new ambassador to China was a walk in the park despite criticism that he was too old to nurture Philippine relations with the world's biggest and fastest-growing economy.

Guingona was on hand to welcome the Chinese leader along with Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, outgoing Ambassador Willy Gaa, Manila International Airport Authority general manager Alfonso Cusi, representatives from the Chinese Embassy and Chinese-Filipino businessmen led by Lucio Tan and Francis Chua, president of the Federation of Filipino-Chi-

GUINGONA/ A22



IN CELEBRATION OF POPE BENEDICT XVI. President Arroyo and former President Cory Aquino lead the high-powered flock that attended a Mass at the Manila Cathedral on Tuesday to express solidarity with the new Pope elected last week in the Vatican. It was also attended by other government officials, bishops, priests and nuns.

ERIK ARAZAS

Lacson wants PNP informant summoned

By Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. PANFILO Lacson said yesterday he knew not only the three relatives of a top government official tagged by a police officer as the biggest recipients of "jueteng" money but also the whistle-blower.

Lacson, police chief during detained President Joseph Estrada's term, told reporters he had no doubt who the INQUIRER source was.

"It's up to you to find out. But in due time (you will know because) as I said, he should be invited (to the hearing) as a resource person. He's a police officer," Lacson said.

But Malacañang continued to dismiss as nothing but idle talk the report about the trio.

"The problem here is rumormongering," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said on dwIZ radio. "And people's names are tarnished although the accusations are not supported by facts," he said.

The other day, Bunye said Malacañang did not engage in rumors after he was asked to comment on speculation that two of the three recipients of jueteng money were First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and his son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

An INQUIRER source said the three relatives of the top government official known by their code names M1, M2 and JS7 had been raking in millions of pesos in protection money from jueteng operations.

Lacson said the police officer, who was once a provincial director, knew what he was talking about.

"He has personal firsthand experience on or knowledge of the payola going on between gambling operators and law enforcers," the senator said.

PALACE/ A21

Businessman cleared of Karen Vertido rape

DAVAO CITY—The rape case that drew national interest filed nine years ago against a former president of the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. by its then executive director ended yesterday in an acquittal.

Vertigo defied public opinion by going public with her charges of rape against a prominent businessman in the city.

"On March 26, 1996, Jose Custodio raped me. Today, a woman in the judiciary raped me. Her name is Virginia Europa," the complainant, Karen Vertido, said at a press conference held hours after the verdict was handed down.

The decision of Judge Europa of Regional Trial Court Branch 11 centered on Vertido's failure to cry out or seek help during her ordeal.

Europa brushed aside the testimony of Dr. June Pagaduan and Dr. Pureza Onate, psychiatric experts on post-traumatic stress disorder, saying that during cross-examination, they revealed that there were "material details" they did not know about because they did not ask Vertido for fear of ag-

BUSINESSMAN/ A22

Neighbors 'heard loud noises' from Ramos house

By Luige A. del Puerto and Tarra V. Quismundo

AS EARLY as 3 a.m. Sunday, neighbors heard the voices of women, who seemed to be quarreling, coming from the house of Foreign Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos in Makati City, police said.

Alicia was found dead four hours later on the second floor of the six-bedroom house, where she and her younger sister, Leticia, both lived. Leticia, 61, told police that three hooded men had attacked her and her sister at around 5:30 a.m.

"The witnesses who were awake at the time ... heard loud noises coming from two women inside the room [house]," said Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, director of the Southern Police District.

Garcia said the women "appeared to be having a quarrel."

But the neighbors thought the screams they heard were the usual ones they were used to hearing and, hence, did not meddle, said PO2 Reuel Riodique, case investigator.

Other witnesses said they did not notice at the time anyone loitering outside the house of the unmarried Ramos sisters on Boyle Street in Barangay Palanan, Garcia said.

But Garcia was quick to say that robbery was still the angle being pursued by investigators.

"Right now, the sister is being treated by us as the primary witness and we are still verifying and validating the angle of [robbery]," he said when asked if Leticia was being considered a suspect.

NEIGHBORS/ A22

Family court judge seeks marriage annulment

BAGUIO CITY—A family court judge here is seeking the annulment of her marriage to a human rights lawyer on grounds of personal differences.

As a consequence, the competence of Regional Trial Court Judge Iluminada Cabato-Cortes as a family court judge has been questioned.

But according to RTC clerk of court Remedios Balderas-Reyes, Cortes' case was "a simple annulment complaint that must go through a [routine] process."

And as a matter of practice, annulment cases are often decided behind closed doors, Reyes said.

"There is talk that the judge may be relieved as a family court judge because of fears she may be affected by the cases [lined up before her]," City Prosecutor Benedicto Carantes said.

But Carantes said no relief order had been issued by the Supreme Court.

In fact, no Baguio lawyer handling cases filed in Cortes' sala was complaining that the judge's marital problems had made her biased in any manner, he said.

Philippine judicial rules select family court judges "according to competence," and not family background, "so I don't think this will affect her career," Carantes said, adding:

"I have not heard of any circumstance wherein a family court judge was removed because of his or her family turmoil."

Cortes' annulment case is being handled by Judge Amado Caguioa, also of the family court.

Government prosecutor Margarita Manalo, who is overseeing the case, said Cortes preferred to keep it a private matter.

Her husband, Reynaldo Cortes, a former coordinator of the Free

FAMILY/ A22

MOST majestic residents of Tacdugan Reef off San Jacinto and Ticao Island in Masbate, the manta rays, will be the beneficiaries of the Blue Zoo Foundation launched last week to protect and study the manta rays.

YVETTE LEE/CONTRIBUTOR

Masbate haven for manta rays

By Jed Ll. Bacason and Leo Martin B. Ganace
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—If Donsol in Sorsogon has its whale sharks, San Jacinto in Masbate has its manta rays.

The once sleepy town has become one of the Bicol region's major tourist destinations since a haven of giant manta rays was discovered off its coast about two years ago.

Now it is a "hot spot" for local and foreign divers and tourists in general.

Last year, about 200 local and foreign visitors came, San Jacinto Mayor Aries Espinosa said.

He said the number could

MASBATE/ A9

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/04/27/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Second FRONTPAGE

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Farmers buck ₱10-B coco import deal

FARMERS' groups yesterday asked a Quezon City court to block a P10-billion import deal between a local coco oil firm and a Chinese company which they alleged would be financed from the coconut levy funds.

The farmers, grouped under the Bantay Marcos Wealth at Coconut Levy Fund, jumped the gun on the deal even before the documents could be signed by asking the court to determine the validity of the agreement.

The agreement between a subsidiary of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills Group (CIIF) and the China National Technical Import and Export Corp. will be signed during the visit here this week of Chinese President Hu Jintao, said Romeo Formanes, who moderated a press conference yesterday.

The farmers admitted they did not have proof the deal would be financed through the coco levy funds. But they said they had enough basis to believe this as the CIIF is a part of the United Coconut Planters Bank which the courts have ruled was bought with coco levy funds during the rule of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Under a memorandum of agreement, the Chinese party agreed to supply farm machinery and equipment, including 5,000 farm tractors, 10,000 shallow well pumps and 500 diesel generators between June 2005 and May 2010.

The CIIF, through its subsidiary Legaspi Oil Cocofiber Corp., agreed to import 500 tractors, 1,000 shallow wells, 50 diesel engines and generators between June 2005 and May 2006.

Formanes said the deal was worth "not lower than P10 billion."

He said a "reformist" in one of the offices involved in the deal leaked a copy of the MOA to the farmers. *D.J. Yap and Kristine Jade Tinio*

₱8.4-B Agusan coco project sill alive, says Yap

By TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINE Coconut Authority has not abandoned a plan to establish a hybrid coconut nursery in Agusan del Sur and is pushing ahead with a feasibility study to determine the suitability of the province as a location for the project, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said yesterday.

Yap told reporters the November 2004 memorandum of understanding between the PCA and two other groups to explore the possibility of jointly developing 110,000 hectares of the Agusan Valley into a coconut plantation was still valid.

"You can't strike this down whimsically. We have to follow the process. We must strike this down on the basis of its merits or demerits. You can't strike it down on the basis of default or omission," he said.

The project came to public attention when the then PCA administrator Evangeline Valbuena accused Yap, who chairs the PCA, had pushed her out of the agency for questioning and refusing to support the Agusan Valley project.

Yap and Valbuena appeared at the second hearing yesterday of the Senate committee on agriculture and food's probe into the project, but no sparks flew between them.

Unsuitable

Valbuena claimed the government was planning to use the coconut levy funds to fund the Agusan del Sur project to the tune of P8.4 billion.

She said Agusan del Sur was not suitable as a seed nut supply base because it was far from the coast where the supply of chloride was found, among other reasons.

The PCA board, in a letter to committee chair Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., disputed Valbuena's claim, saying she did not back her assertions with either research or scientific data.

The board stressed that a feasibility study, including an evaluation of the province's rainfall pattern, terrain and soil analysis, was "essential" and had yet to be completed.

"The board members are one in saying that a study on the development of Agusan is good for the coconut industry," it said in a statement signed by PCA corporate secretary Josefina Miranda.

Echoing Yap, the PCA board said the MOU did not state that a contract had been signed between the parties to the project.

The two other signatories to the MOU were the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills Group and UCPB-CIIF Finance and Development Corp. (Cocofinance).

"There is no contract/agreement for the alleged P8.4-billion coco levy project, since there is no proposal or much less a project to talk about. The P8.4 billion is at best a wild input data in the realm of a feasibility study," it said in the statement.

Yap left the hearing at around noon, to go to Malacañang, without being asked a single question on the controversial project.

The hearing focused on the status, management and utilization of coco levy funds.

Public funds

In her testimony, Haydee Yorac, chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, said the Supreme Court had declared in December 2001 that the coco levy funds were "prima facie" public funds.

She said the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court ruled in July 2004 that these were "conclusively public funds" held in trust by the government for coco farmers.

Executives of the United Coconut Planters Bank, which administers the coco levy assets in the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF), said the bank was not subject to government audit.

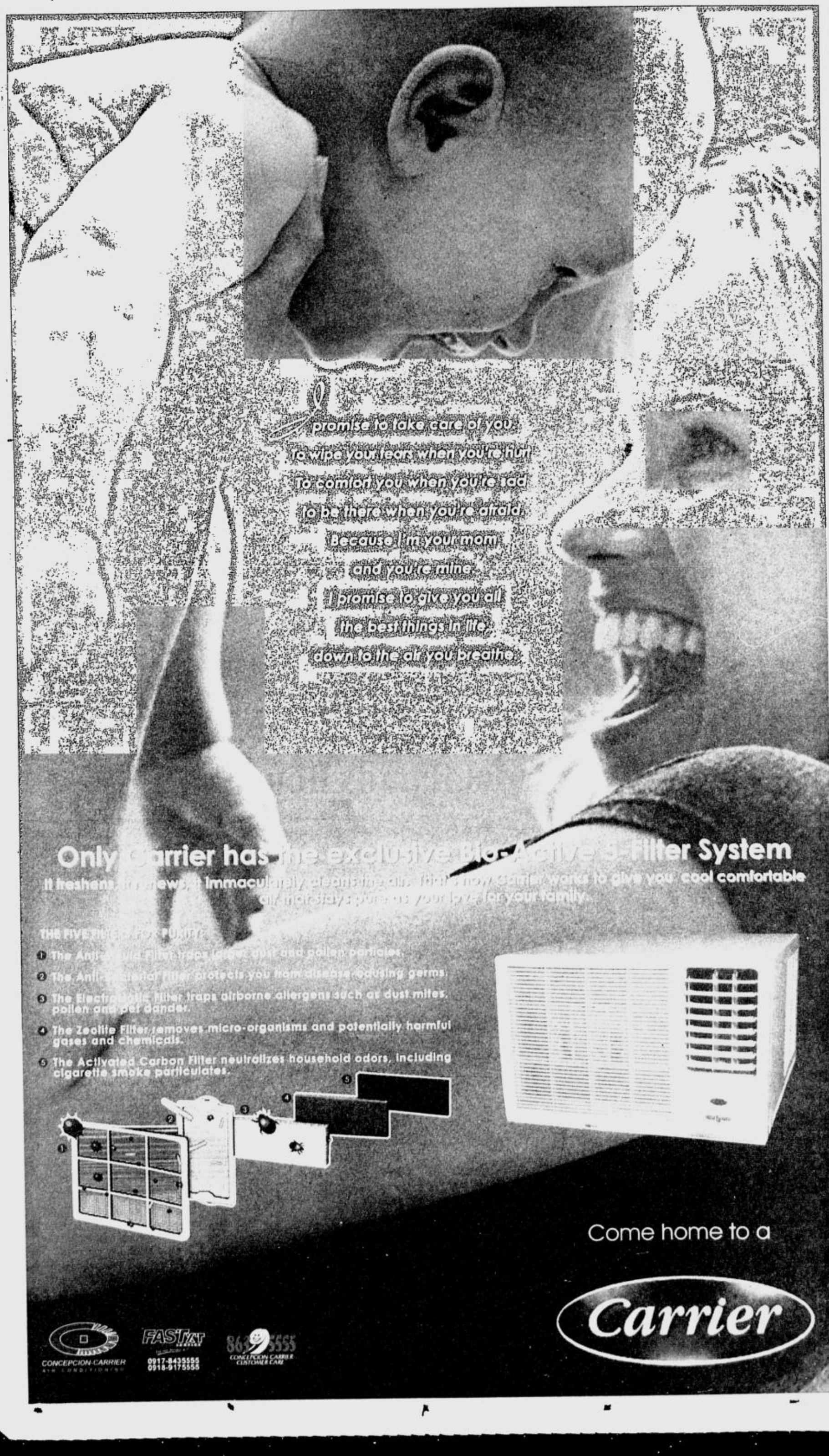
Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile also pointed out that the CIIF has its own board of directors which is beyond the control of directors of the bank.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña demanded that Commission on Audit submit to the committee reports on their line audit of coco levy funds to ascertain how the money was utilized over the past several years.

Yorac said the government has taken steps to keep the UCPB and the CIIF boards of directors separate "so there will be no monopoly of control."

"But some problems are arising out of the separation of the two boards," she said.

Four coconut farmers sit on the UCPB board while 28 to 30 others sit on the CIIF board.



NOLI MEETS THE POPE
Vice President Noli de Castro gives his respects to Pope Benedict XVI during the new pontiff's inauguration in the Vatican on Sunday. The Pope praised Filipinos for being strong and firm in their faith and expressed elation that the Philippines has remained the bastion of Catholicism in Asia. De Castro, who represented President Macapagal-Arroyo in the inauguration, described his audience with the Pope as "very touching, encouraging and a humbling experience."

DOJ calls Richard Gomez to tax probe

By Armand N. Nocum

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has summoned actor Richard Gomez for the preliminary investigation of the tax evasion case filed against the actor by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Gomez was asked to appear before State Prosecutor Lawrence Perfecto Chua-Cheng at 10 a.m. on May 5 to submit evidence.

Gomez, who is Richard Frank Icasiano Gomez in real life, was accused of failing to file his income tax returns from 2000 to 2003.

BIR records showed that the only transaction the actor made with the internal revenue office was the payment of documentary stamp tax amounting to P786,975 on Nov. 6, 2003 for the acquisition of a Forbes Park property worth P52 million.

Through his bookkeeper, Gomez had claimed that he did not earn or receive any income during the taxable years being questioned because he had been "donating (his) income to a foundation."

But BIR agents found that Gomez had actively pursued his profession as a movie and television actor, model, commercial talent, product endorser, and television host from 2000 to 2003.

Although he filed his income tax amounting to P1.5 million in 2002, he did not declare the source of his income for the purchase of his Makati mansion.

Defensor to int'l mining foes: Back off, or else . . .

By Blanche S. Rivera

BACK off or you'll be arrested.

This was the warning issued Monday by Environment Secretary Michael Defensor to international anti-mining advocates after meeting with tribal elders from Mindanao who claimed that they were being used by foreign groups in their anti-mining campaign.

"They have no right to meddle in the affairs of the country. They should respect the policies of the Philippines, especially the economic policy to do mining," Defensor said in a press conference at the DENR central office Monday night.

Defensor noted that international non-government organizations were becoming invasive in their efforts to rally support against mining activities not only in the Philippines but worldwide.

"I don't mind that they have an advocacy, but for them to agitate, finance people (to go against mining), that's a different thing... I can go to the point of having them arrested if we have proof that they are directly agitating communities," Defensor said.

Foreign NGOs

Defensor aired the warning after leaders of the 2,000-strong Siocon Subano Association Inc. (SSAI) complained that foreign NGOs were claiming before the international community that the tribe opposed to the gold mining operation of Toronto Ventures Inc. in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte.

SSAI president Juanito Tumangkis said the "biggest problem" of the indigenous community in Siocon was the persistent attempt of the NGOs to convince them to oppose TVI operations in their ancestral land.

"But we are not opposed to TVI. We have a MOA (memorandum of agreement) with them, and they have agreed to give us royalties. The NGOs are quoting people who are against mining, but there are less than 10 of them," Tumangkis said, speaking in Tagalog.

The TVI has already remitted around P1 million to the SSAI since August last year, he said. The Canadian firm has also spent some P30 million for social development projects in the community such as a school and a medical center.

Six Subanon leaders, along with their lawyer Pablo Bernardo, met with Defensor Monday to air their complaints against the foreign NGOs.

The leaders submitted affidavits belying the anti-mining pronouncements of a certain Jose "Boy" Anoy, who claimed to be a Subanon timuay, or tribal leader, even if he was not. Anoy has been quoted by international NGOs to prove that TVI's activities were being opposed by the indigenous community.

The SSAI identified the international NGOs as Mining Watch-Canada, the London-based Christian Aid and Indigenous People's Links, and the Diopin Committee on Mining Issues based in Dipolog City.

Bernardo said not one of the NGOs have sought out their comments on TVI's operations, opting instead to talk to Anoy and Onsiro Mato, known supporters of small-scale miners.

The Subanons have also asked Sen. Jamby Madrigal, chair of the Senate committee on culture, to investigate the interference of the NGOs in their community.

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Ramos asked: Why so silent on Borlongan?

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SILENCE of the many makes them suspicious to the public.

Running priest Fr. Robert Reyes said this yesterday as he appealed to former President Fidel Ramos, ex-chair emeritus of the defunct Urban Bank Inc., and other friends of CEO Teodoro Borlongan to help clear the name of the late bank's executive in the closure of the company.

Reyes, who held a Mass at the Supreme Court grounds to commemorate the collapse of Urban Bank five year's ago following massive withdrawals, said Ramos and the others should explain what really led to the closure.

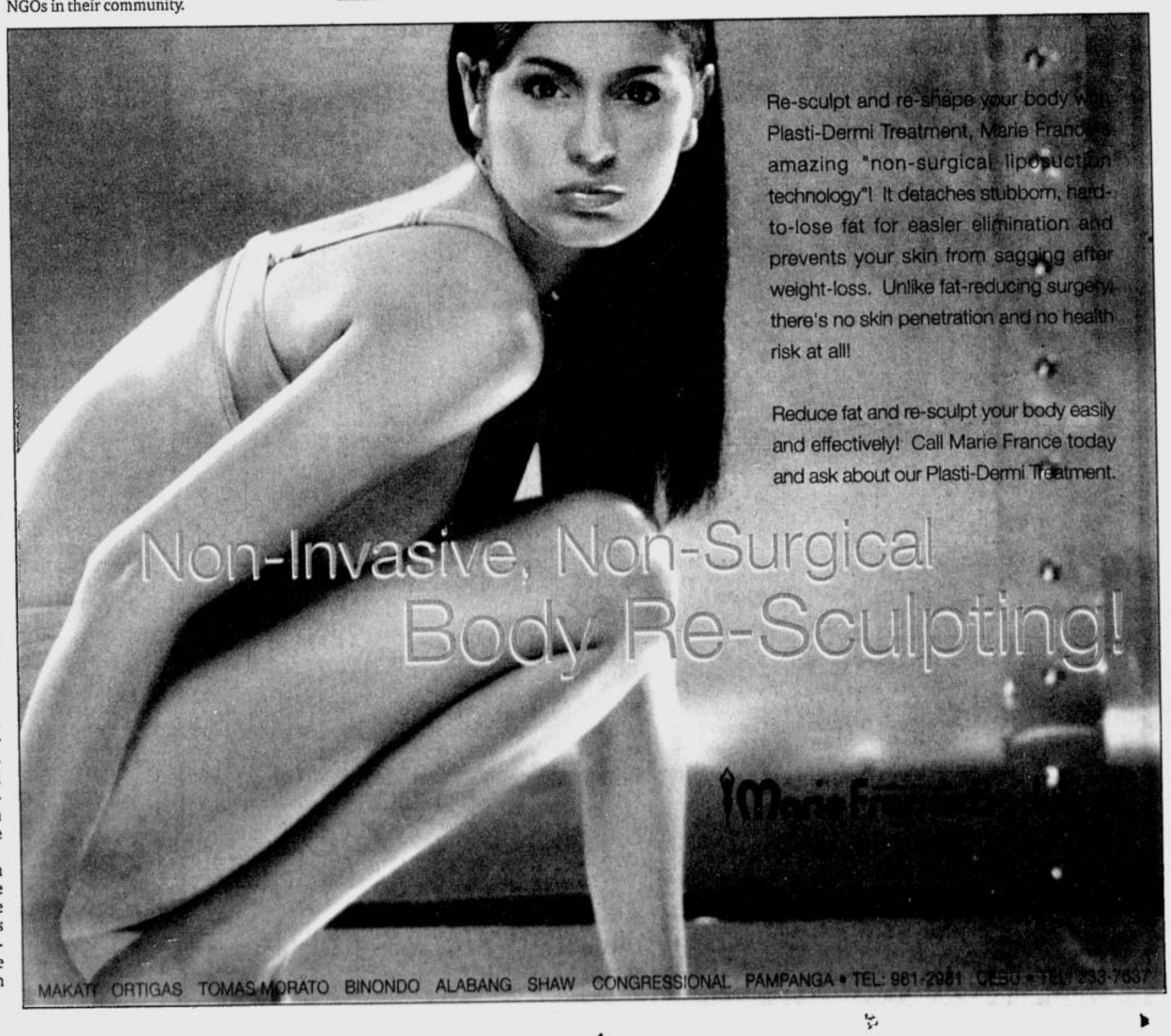
"He (Ramos) is very quiet. Why did he not do anything?" Reyes told the INQUIRER in an interview after the morning Mass.

According to Reyes, "Ramos is in a position to say something or do something. . . even if belatedly. Something can still be done to rectify an error."

"All good men and women should stand up for good men and women. You should not be afraid. If you are a good man, stand up for a good man unless you are otherwise," he added.

Borlongan shot himself on April 11 in the left temple inside his vehicle minutes after bringing flowers to the grave site of his parents and brother in Marikina. In a farewell note emailed to his friends before he committed suicide, Borlongan showed frustration over what he believed to be injustice in the Urban Bank case.

Borlongan and nine others had been charged with estafa and economic sabotage in connection with the bank's downfall. He fought back by filing graft and other charges against officials of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. with the Supreme Court, but the high tribunal had thrown out most of the cases.



COPW MESSAGE TO CONSUMERS: CONSERVE WATER

We need to conserve water as supply is greatly reduced this summer brought about by the El Niño phenomenon.

We usually consume more water during summer. This is why our water bills go up accordingly. We should make a conscious effort to use our water wisely so that our water bills do not go up during summer and, more importantly, so as not to aggravate our water supply situation.

It is, therefore, timely that we inform the public on our findings regarding the performance of Manila Water Company Inc. (MWCI) for the first quarter of 2005 as well as our computation of water bills charged by MWCI according to consumption levels.

COPW concurs with the report of the MWSS Regulatory Office as well as the data submitted by Manila Water Co. to the COPW which states:

1. The MWSS and its Regulatory Office granted a tariff rate increase of 32% from P14.01 to P18.55 per cubic meter for unsewered customers effective January 1, 2005.
2. The COPW confirms Manila Water's compliance with the 5 year rate rebasing that the cumulative staggered rate increase will not exceed P7.00 per cu. meter for the 5-year period (January 2003 to January 2007) except for:
   a) Annual increase in the Consumer Price Index
   b) Quarterly foreign currency exchange adjustment
   c) Compliance with the 60% to 40% equity to debt ratio.

MANILA WATER PERFORMANCE FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2005

1. Target: Reduce water losses (Non Revenue) from 63% in January 1997 to 43% in ten years, or January 2007. Manila Water has met its target on March 31, 2005 or 21 months ahead of schedule. *This is why despite the 20% reduction in water supply due to El Niño, Manila Water managed to provide the same volume of water supply to its customers.*
2. Target: Expand water service coverage from 325,000 households in January 1997 to 581,000 households by January 2007. *Manila Water will meet its target before the end of 2005. Connections for the first quarter of 2005 have already totaled 570,000 households or 98% with 21 months to go.*
3. Target: Improve 24-hour access to drinking water from 26% in January 1997 to 100% by January 2007 in the MWCI central distribution area. As of March 2005, 91% of the area have access to 24-hour water.

We are therefore pleased with our quarterly review of Manila Water on their compliance to agreed commitments since January 2003. Manila Water has outperformed its Key Performance Indicators and Business Efficiency Measures.

SUMMARY OF WATER TARIFF RATES BY MANILA WATER: Please keep this to guide you in monitoring your water consumption.

For the benefit of the consuming public, we are publishing a schedule of water bills corresponding to the consumption levels where the majority of MWCI customers fall.

Ninety percent (90%) of MWCI connections are residential and semi-business customers consuming 10 to 50 cu.m. The remaining ten percent (10%) are commercial/industrial customers consuming 250-350 cu.m.

In terms of revenues, MWCI residential/semi-business customers account for fifty percent (50%) of the revenue base while the commercial/industrial for the other fifty percent (50%).

RESIDENTIAL

	MONTHLY WATER BILL (in PhP)	
Cu. m.	UNSEWERED*	SEWERED**
10	72.04	104.04
20	155.26	225.09
30	302.27	438.92
40	449.28	652.75
50	638.94	928.61

SEMI-BUSINESS

	MONTHLY WATER BILL (in PhP)	
Cu. m.	UNSEWERED	SEWERED
10	111.59	161.57
20	242.81	352.43
30	401.76	583.62
40	560.70	814.81
50	759.31	1,103.70

COMMERCIAL

	MONTHLY WATER BILL (in PhP)	
Cu. m.	UNSEWERED	SEWERED
10	278.66	404.57
100	2,774.50	4,034.89
200	5,562.59	8,090.29
300	8,358.13	12,156.53
400	11,161.14	16,233.63

INDUSTRIAL

	MONTHLY WATER BILL (in PhP)	
Cu. m.	UNSEWERED	SEWERED
10	300.38	436.16
100	3,005.49	4,370.87
200	6,026.09	8,764.47
300	9,069.07	13,190.62
400	12,134.43	17,649.33

* Unsewered customers are those not connected to Manila Water sewerlines.
** Sewered customers are those connected to Manila Water sewerlines and are charged 50% of their Water Charge as Sewerage Fee.
Note: 1 Cubic meter is equivalent to 5 drums or 1,000 liters of water.

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Stalemate: Senators quit talks on VAT

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SENATORS on the bicameral congressional panel yesterday suspended talks on the value-added tax reform bill and decided to stick with their position to leave the VAT at 10 percent, leaving no hope that the key measure would pass before the April 30 deadline set by Senate President Franklin Drilon.

But in a rare move inviting presidential intervention, Sen. Ralph Recto openly proposed writing "standby authority" for the President into the VAT law so she could raise the rate to 12 percent and break the stalemate with the House which passed a bill hiking the VAT to 12 percent.

Recto said the Senate panel has no plans of meeting again until a compromise is found.

"There is no need to go back to the bicam because we will fail to agree anyway so (we should) allow for political consolidation to take place," he said.

It was not clear why the senators did not want to resolve the deadlock at the bicam, which is the venue for reaching compromises, and seek presidential intervention in the face of the doctrine of separation of powers.

Recto said it was possible to state the conditions under which the President can raise the VAT rate in the VAT measure itself.

He said the National Internal Revenue Code gives the President the power to raise the tax rate, by changing the system of taxation from net to gross.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, one of the VAT hardliners, said the Senate panel decided to stick to the chamber's version because its members "fear [a] public backlash."

He said the senators would not want to lose face by changing its unanimous decision to maintain the VAT at 10 percent and lift exemptions to widen the tax base to raise enough revenues.

But he said the panel had yet to arrive at a consensus because some members worry about going against the President's wishes.

Recto revealed that there was "very extensive discussion" of a fourth option that he had presented—that of maintaining the VAT at 10 percent but giving the President the power to increase it to 12 percent in a year or two under certain conditions.

He earlier presented three other options: 10 percent, 11 percent and 12 percent.

He said the fourth option could ovide the "break in the stale-nate."

"We have to move on. I suppose there is VAT-fatigue for everyone," Recto said.

He said he wanted to "explore" this option and he would in fact put it down in writing and consult the minority members of his panel.

"I am not really opposed to the standby (power) because I believe they can get their target revenue from 10 percent. If after one or two years, they could not achieve their target and they need to increase, it's up to the President. I think it is possible," Recto said.

Recto, who is said to have called the President the other day after it became clear that four senators were adamant at maintaining the VAT at 10 percent—yesterday said Ms Arroyo should intervene and call for her allies in the Senate to vote for a 12-percent hike.

He suggested the President should now step in and talk to her allies to support her position.

"Since it is important to the Palace to have 12 percent, they should talk to the members of the bicam panel to get 12 percent, right?" he said.

Former DILG chief acquitted of graft

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday acquitted former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno of the graft charges filed against him by the government for lack of evidence.

In a 77-page decision, the Sandiganbayan fourth division presided over by Justice Gregory Ong said prosecutors failed to substantiate charges that Puno just wanted to "acquire a controlling interest" in Wattmaster Inc., Philippine dealer of Motorola communications equipment, when he withdrew his signature from the contract between the firm and the government.

The decision was concurred in by Associate Justices Jose Hernandez and Rodolfo Ponferrada.

The antigraft court further ruled that the September 1998 contract for phases 4 and 5 of the Multi-Trunked Radio System never took effect.

"The MTRS phases 4 and 5 contracts that Puno signed were, for all legal intents and purposes, only proposed or proposed agreements, not duly perfected contracts as erroneously alleged in the information," the court said.

Prosecution lawyers alleged that Puno signed the multimillion-peso Motorola deal with the Philippine National Police because he wanted to get a stake in the distribution of Motorola products in the Philippines.

The PNP in 1993 planned to upgrade its two-way radios to boost its campaign against criminality. This was to be done in five phases, the first three of which were implemented during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos.

The remaining phases came due during the term of President Joseph Estrada. As in the previous contracts, Motorola was chosen to supply the communications equipment for the police force.

Phase 4 of the project was for the procurement of the MTRS in the National Capital Region and Regions III and IV. The procurement was worth more than P99 million.

Phase 5 covered Regions I and II and had an estimated cost of P49 million.

In acquitting Puno, the court said the failure of the prosecution to prove its allegation prompted it to grant Puno's demurrer to evidence. *Nelson F. Flores*

Corrections

THE STORY, "A brilliant, efficient and quiet diplomat," on the front page of the April 25 issue misstated that Flor Contemplacion was executed for the murder of her 4-year-old Singaporean ward and another Filipino maid, Delia Maga. The slain boy was Maga's ward and not Contemplacion's.

* * *

THE "COCKTALES" column of April 18, "Horses for Pacific courses," listed Social Security System president and chief executive officer Corazon de la Paz as one of the board nominees of Pacific Plans Inc. De la Paz was never elected board member of Pacific Plans Inc.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent, pending the appointment of a new readers' advocate, to Isagani Yambot, publisher, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: iyambot@inquirer.com.ph.

US laments recall of RP workers from Iraq

THE UNITED States has expressed concern over the Philippines' move to bring home all Filipino workers from Iraq amid an unrelenting insurgency there, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said yesterday.

Romulo said US Embassy officials have raised the issue several times since Manila offered to fly home all its estimated 6,000 Filipino workers after two died in apparent attacks earlier this month.

The Filipinos comprise the biggest number of foreigners working for US-run military installations in Iraq. They are mostly employed as cooks and drivers, but are often placed in dangerous situations.

"I have been talking to them (US officials) ever since. They know this and I told them this is our position," Romulo told reporters.

"We have to explain to them that our obligation is to our citizens. We are a sovereign country and we have to protect our citizens."

Two Filipino drivers were killed earlier this month in attacks. Five other Filipinos riding in a convoy were also ambushed, and two of them sustained injuries. A Filipino accountant, meanwhile, has been held hostage since November by Iraqi militants.

Ties between the Philippines and US chilled last year when government banned travel of its citizens to Iraq and pulled out its token contribution serving with the US-led coalition forces.

The pullout came after a Filipino truck driver was kidnapped by militants, who demanded that the Philippines bring home all its troops from Iraq. The driver was subsequently freed. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, April 27, 2005
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 15:1-6
Gospel: John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower. If any of my branches doesn't bear fruit, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you; live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples."

Commentary

These readings are a chance to sit at table with Jesus and listen to his last words, his testament to be cherished and acted upon in his memory, in his honor and in obedience to his commands for us. Jesus is the vine and the Father the vinedresser. We are the branches and we exist to bear fruit for the wine and the joy of the world that needs to drink of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We remain on the vine, remain in Jesus by keeping his Word deep in our hearts and practicing it in our lives and without this Word, without the Spirit given to us, we can do nothing. We are disciples and we glorify God the Father when we bear fruit and do the work of Jesus. Are we bearing much fruit? Do we cling to the Word of the Lord and seek to make Jesus' kingdom a reality in the world? Are we truly disciples of the Vine, even in the face of suffering, hardships, exclusion and death?

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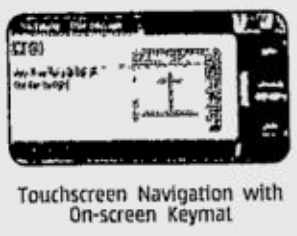
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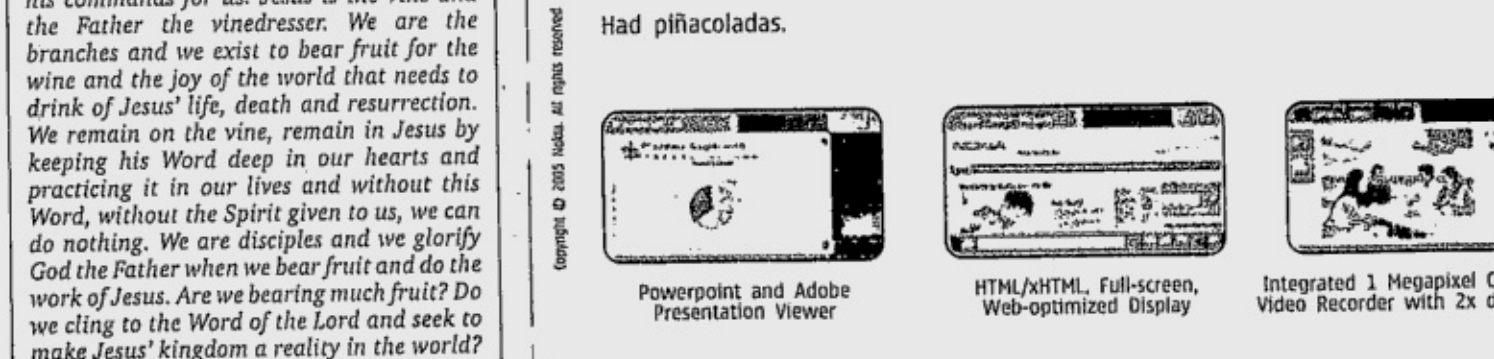

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Congress eyes repeal of Epira

By Michael Lim Ubac

ENRAGED by the latest hike in power rates, Congress is eyeing the possible repeal of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) which has failed to stem the financial hemorrhage of the National Power Corp. (Napocor).

Akbayan Party-list Rep. Etta Rosales yesterday took the floor to remind the House of Representatives of its duty to protect Filipinos from the onslaught of higher power rates.

"With power rates expected to go up once again by next month, it becomes imperative for the House, in exercise of its oversight function, to deeply reflect and ruminate once again on the root causes of problems beleaguering the power sector," said Rosales.

She said there must be more options available than just "biting the bullet" to use Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's "appallingly chosen words."

"We must go back to the legal framework that underpins the power industry," said Rosales.

Bayan Muna Party-list Rep Joel Virador noted that by Napocor's own estimate, ordinary households would be paying P197 each day just for ironing clothes, drawing a significant portion off the already meager income of lifeline consumers.

Besides the repeal of Epira and the oil deregulation law, Virador pushed for a P125-legislated wage increase for workers.

In the meantime, several progressive lawmakers want an immediate accounting of the P1.2 billion loan extended by the Asian Development Bank to Napocor during the Estrada administration to rehabilitate the power sector and lower power rates.

"The (passage of) Epira was a pre-condition to the release of the second tranche of the $900 million Asian Development Bank Power Sector Restructuring loan approved in 1998, and the International Monetary Fund's release of a $300 million rehabilitation loan in 1999," said Anakpawis Party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano, co-author of House Bill 2530 seeking the repeal of Epira.

Mariano, however, noted that four years after the passage of the Epira, Filipino consumers remain at the mercy of power cartels.

Rosales said the passage of Epira did not prevent Napocor from incurring further losses. From a deficit of P8.2 billion in 2001, Napocor's deficit surged to P21.7 billion in 2002, P66.6 billion in 2003, and an estimated P100 billion last year.

"Apart from the national government, the NPC is the biggest contributor to the country's consolidated public sector deficit, and thus accounts considerably for what is presently regarded as a fiscal crisis," she said.

Rosales also noted the failure of the independent power producers (IPP) to substantively comply with the requirements of Section 68 of Epira law, which mandates a thorough review of all IPP contracts.

Among others, she said that the IPP review found that some IPP contracts were evidently more costly to the government.

MILF to boycott ARMM polls

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will boycott the August elections for a new set of officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), its spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The ARMM, comprising five provinces, was created as part of a 1996 peace deal with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The MILF, which grew out of the MNLF, stayed out of the peace deal and kept up its fight against the government.

"We don't recognize any autonomous mechanism in any part of Mindanao," said MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu.

"It has been a long-standing policy of our central committee not to participate in any elections in the autonomous region. It is our belief that autonomy is not the real solution to the decades-old conflict in southern Philippines," Kabalu said.

Close to a million voters in ARMM will be electing a new governor, vice governor and about 20 regional legislative members on Aug. 8. Candidates have until Saturday to file their papers. *Leila B. Salaverria; Reuters*

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Grudgingly, AFP releases Holy Week bombing suspect on bail

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE SUSPECTED Holy Week bomber was released yesterday after four weeks in military custody.

Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 96 Judge Afable Cajigal ordered the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (Isafp) to release Dawud Santos after he posted a ₱200,000 bail.

The bail was for Santos's case of illegal possession of explosives, firearms and ammunition in Camiling, Tarlac.

The Armed Forces reluctantly released Santos to his wife Jamillah and other relatives yesterday.

"We just follow our judicial system," said AFP information chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual.

Santos was arrested by Isafp agents in his house in Cubao, Quezon City on March 22.

Isafp alleged that Santos was involved in a plot by the Raja Solaiman Movement (RSM), a group of Muslim converts, to bomb Metro Manila during the recent Holy Week.

Santos, whose Christian name is Tyrone, is the brother of RSM leader Ahmed Santos.

But Santos has so far not been charged in connection with the 10 sacks of explosives materials and 18 canisters of improvised explosives devices found in a raid in an apartment in Fairview, Quezon City on March 23.

Isafp had said the recovered ammonium nitrate would have been used by the Abu Sayyaf to bomb "soft targets" in Metro Manila during the Holy Week.

At the time of his arrest, Santos was out on bail from a case of illegal possession of firearms in Alaminos, Pangasinan.

Isafp earlier told Judge Cajigal that Santos is being kept under custody because of an arrest warrant issued by a Camiling, Tarlac trial court.

The military yesterday showed Santos to the media for the first time since his arrest.

Handcuffed, tense and silent, Santos watched his wife and relatives sign his release papers in front of Lt. Col. Pascual and about two dozen media men.

Santos did not answer any of the reporters' questions.

When he did speak, he spoke so softly that he could hardly be heard.

Speaking in Tagalog, Santos said he was a Muslim and that he has been treated badly by the system.

He left Camp Aguinaldo on board an ABS-CBN crew vehicle.

Subang; 56

MINING engineer Armando Subang died March 7 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He was 56. His remains lie at the Loyola Memorial Park in Barangka, Marikina, and will be cremated tomorrow.

Widower of Imelda Bautista, he is survived by daughters Ianne and Nina; sisters Marietta, Elenita, and Flordeliza; brother Pete; sister-in-law Aurea Perez; and brothers-in-law Antonio Bungay, Manuel Godines, Johnny Sundiam and Armin Cruz.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LABOR LAW (LABOR RELATIONS LAW) —In an unorganized establishment, only a legitimate union may file a petition for certification election. - The DOLE would not have entertained the Petition if the union were not a legitimate labor organization within the meaning of the Labor Code. Under this Code, in an unorganized establishment, only a legitimate union may file a petition for certification election. Hence, while it is not clear from the record whether respondent union is a legitimate organization, we are not readily inclined to believe otherwise, especially in the light of the pro-labor policies enshrined in the Constitution and the Labor Code. Verily, the union has the requisite personality to sue in its own name in order to challenge the unfair labor practice committed by petitioners against it and its members. It would be an unwarranted impairment of the right to self-organization through formation of labor associations if thereafter such collective entities would be barred from instituting action in their representative capacity. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Panganiban, Third Division, Me-Shurn Corporation v. Me-Shurn Workers Union-FSM, G.R. No. 156292, January 11, 2005) BY R.B. VERA

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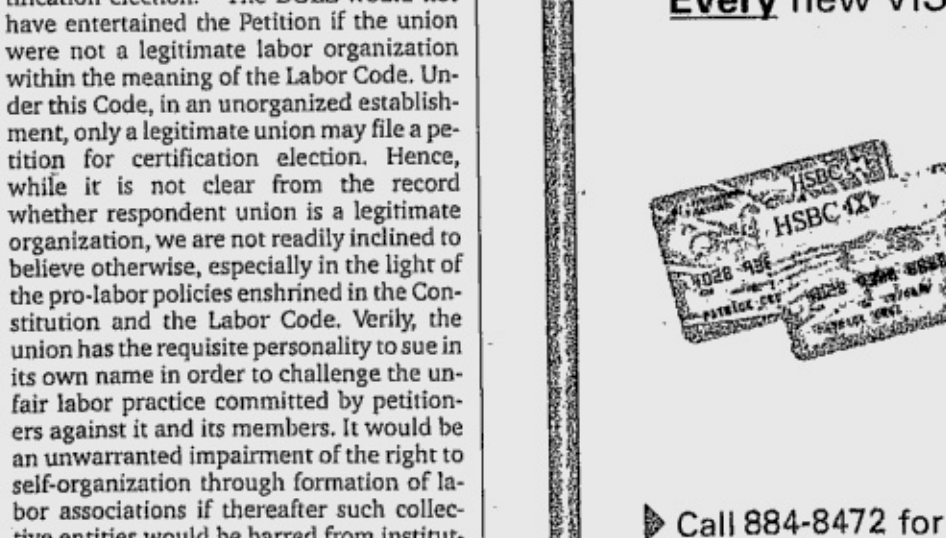

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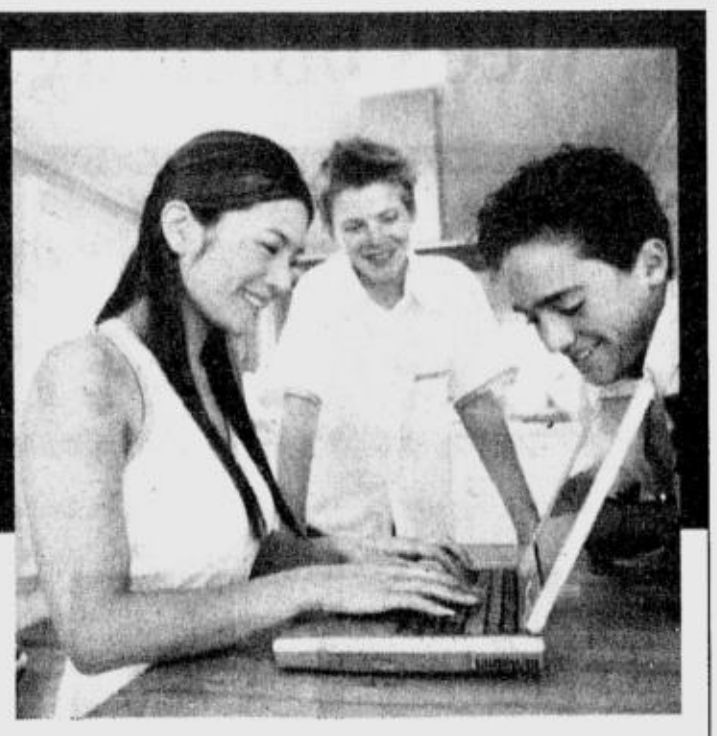

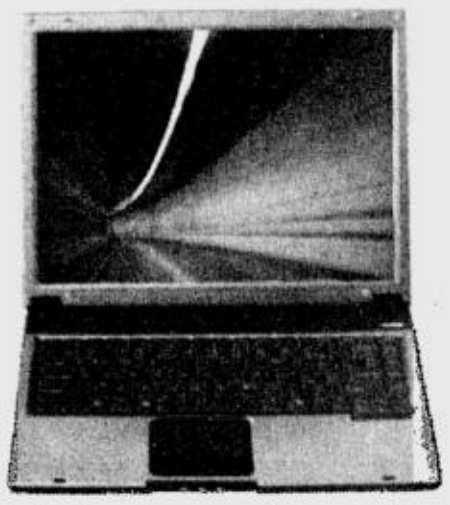

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Elton John to marry male, Canadian lover

From page A1

John's spokesperson Gary Furrow told British Broadcasting Corp. the nuptials could be postponed until 2006.

"A date and a venue has not been set, so it may not be until next year," Furrow told the BBC.

John was reported in The Mirror as saying the wedding could be held in Windsor, west of London, where Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall were married earlier this month.

No honeymoon

"We definitely want to do it about the middle of December, probably in Windsor," John was quoted as saying. "But there will be no honeymoon. I'm on tour."

The pair may be among the first British homosexuals to take advantage of new laws recognizing gay civil partnerships.

The law, which is only applicable to homosexuals and not as an alternative to heterosexual marriage, grants lesbian and gay couples the same tax, pension and inheritance status as married couples.

John has publicly credited Furnish, who he has dated for 11 years, with helping him to overcome addictions to alcohol and drugs.

THE LOVERS make it legal: Elton John will marry his longtime Canadian partner of 11 years, David Furnish, before December in London which recently passed legislation making same-sex marriage legal. AP

Reginald Dwight

Sir Elton Hercules John, CBE, is a very successful British pop singer, pianist, and songwriter. He has created a long string of hit records and projects over a career that is well into its fourth decade. His flamboyant fashion sense, on-stage showmanship, and public struggles with his private life have combined with his talent to make him a popular music icon.

He was born on March 25, 1947, in Pinner, Middlesex, England, and raised primarily by Sheila, his grandmother and his aunt.

John began playing piano when he was four, and when he was 11, won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, where he stayed for six years before leaving for the music business.

First int'l hits

He scored his first international hits in 1970 with his self-titled second album, which included one of his best-loved songs, "Your Song." John was a prolific artist, releasing two albums per year in the early 1970s. His sound immediately set him apart from others by being piano-based in a rock world dominated by guitars.

Another early characteristic was a set of dynamic string arrangements by Paul Buckmaster. Add in Taupin's often opaque but emotionally resonant lyrics, and the results sounded like no one else.

At the same time John also had an ear for the hit single, and went on to become one of the most successful recording artists of the early-mid 1970s, with globally-successful singles including "Rocket Man," "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road," "Bennie and the Jets," "The Bitch is Back," and "Philadelphia Freedom."

'Candle in the Wind'

His biggest 1980s hits included, among others, "I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues," "I'm Still Standing," and a 1986 live recording of "Candle in the Wind" which he recorded with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

The song, which was a tribute to Marilyn Monroe, was originally recorded in 1973 on his Goodbye Yellow Brick Road album. In 1997, he updated the lyrics of "Candle in the Wind" for a special version, mourning the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and this became the fastest selling single of all time.

John has long been associated with AIDS charities after the death of his friends Ryan White and Freddie Mercury, raising large amounts of money and using his public profile to raise awareness of the disease. *AP*

Isang Bukas na Liham

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Kami pong nakalagda sa ibaba ay mga pinuno ng mga asosasyon ng magsasaka at manggagawang bukid ng Roxas & Co. Inc. at Central Azucarera Don Pedro na dating pagmamay-ari nina Don Eduardo Roxas ng Nasugbu, Batangas, pinuno ng mga barangay agrarian committees, at pinuno ng Association of Barangay Captains of Nasugbu, Batangas.

Pinapaabot po namin sa inyo ang aming nakakabahalang kalagayan, dulot ng Desisyon ng Court of Appeals Division of Five (Former Tenth Division) sa kasong "Roxas & Co. Inc. vs. DAR Secretary, KAMAHARI & DAMBA-NFSW" (CA-G.R. SP No. 72131), na pinangungunahan ni Justice Jose Sabio, Jr. na nagdeklara na ang buong lupain ng Nasugbu ay na-convert sa pangturismong gamit kung kaya hindi na pwedeng sakupin ng repormang agraryo, dahil di-umano sa Presidential Proclamation (PP) 1520 na ipinasa ni Marcos noong 1975. Bilang mga lehetimong benepisyaryo ng CARP na inisyuhan ng CLOA sa humigit-kumulang 3,000 ektaryas na lupain nina Don Eduardo Roxas sa Nasugbu, noong 1993, ang desisyon nina Justice Sabio ay sadya pong nagbabantang papatayin kami at ng aming mga pamilya sa gutom, dahil kami ay nabubuhay lamang sa lupang aming sinasaka.

Bagama't ang titulo ng nasabing PP 1520 ay nagdeklara na ang bayan ng Nasugbu, Batangas at Ternate at Maragondon ng Cavite ay saklaw ng Tourism Zone, maliwanag pong nakasaad sa mga probisyon nito na may ilang area (certain areas) lamang ng nasabing mga bayan ang may potensyal para sa turismo, at pag-aaralan at ihihiwalay pa lamang ng Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA) at LGU ng Nasugbu ang nasabing lugar na nakitang may potensyal sa turismo.

Nguni't, sadya pong binago nina Justice Sabio ang nasabing batas at diniklarang automatic at buo ng Nasugbu ay na-convert na sa turismo. Dagdag pa, sadya pong tinanggap nguni't hindi inilahad sa desisyon ang mga napakahalagang mga ebidensya na aming sinumiti upang takpan ang katotohanan, kagaya ng patutunay ng PTA, DAR, DA, Office of the Mayor, at Sangguniang Bayan ng Nasugbu, at iba pa, na ang PTA ay nasa proseso pa lamang ng pag-aaral kung aling lugar sa Nasugbu ang para sa turismo at ang Comprehensive Land Use Plan na kagagawa lamang ng LGU ng Nasugbu, ay nagtutukoy lamang sa ilang *coastal bay areas* para sa turismong gamit, samantalang ang mga lupaing saklaw na ng CARP, ay nanatiling agrikultural ang gamit.

Pati na ang libo-libong mga magsasaka at manggagawang bukid sa ibang lupain ng buong Nasugbu at ang buong lalawigan ng Ilocos Norte, Bataan, ilang areya ng Catanduanes, Negros, Cebu, Davao, Limasawa Island, at iba pa sa Visayas at Mindanao na diniklara ng iba't-ibang proklamasyon ni dating Pres. Marcos na sakop ng Tourism Zone ay papatayin din ng nasabing sinasadyang mali at di-makatarungang desisyon nina Court of Appeals Justice Sabio, Regalado Maambong at Amelita Tolentino.

Kagaya namin, ay sumisigaw din ng kagyat na saklolo ang mga nababahalang LGU ng nasabing mga bayan at lalawigan dahil sila rin ay ginawang inutil at inagawan nina Justice Sabio ng kapangyarihang gumawa ng Land Use Plan ng kani-kanilang nasasakupang teritoryo at posibleng mawawalan ng mga nakakaraming taong nasasakupan sa kanilang mga bayan at lalawigan. Nag-file ng *Motion for Intervention* ang LGU ng Nasugbu, nguni't ito rin ay binasura nina Justice Sabio sa teknikal na rason.

Maliban sa kasong *CARP Exemption* sa buong lupain nito sa Nasugbu, doble-doble at paulit-ulit na naghain sina Don Eduardo Roxas ng marami pang kasong CARP Exemption sa parselang tig 45, 21, 51, 31 etc. ektaryang bahagi ng nasabing buong lupain at dinisisyonan ito nang walang *notice* at ginulat na lamang kami, bago umalis si DAR Sec. Braganza at mas marami pa nang bago umalis si Sec. Pagdanganan sa DAR. Malinaw na ang nasabing desisyon ng DAR Secretary ay dapat ipawalang bisa dahil sa kawalan ng due process, at dahil may desisyon na si Sec. Ernesto Garilao noong 1993 pa at si Sec. Braganza mismo na sakop ang buong lupain ng Roxas sa CARP. Dagdag pa, wala sa sinasabing ordinansa at land use plan ng Nasugbu ang alegasyong *re-classification* ng mga nasabing lupain bilang batayan sa *CARP Exemption Application*, nguni't sinustini pa rin ng iba't ibang division ng Court of Appeals na CARP Exempt ang mga pira-pirasong lupain batay lamang sa mga mali at di makatotohanang Certifications ng MPDC at HLURB. Ito ang ginawang pinal na deisyon nina **Justice Vicente Veloso** ng **Tenth Division sa CA-G.R. SP No. 82226**, sa 45 ektaryang lupain ng Roxas sa Hda. Palico. Pinakansela din nina Justice Andres B. Reyes, Jr. (Second Division) sa kasong *"MEMBERS OF SAMAHANG KAMAHARI-CADP vs. OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT and CADP" (CA-G.R. SP No. 77297)*, ang CLOA ng mga magsasaka ng CADP na pag-aari din nina Don Eduardo Roxas ng Nasugbu, maski na noon pa sa panahon ng kanilang mga ninuno hanggang sa ngayon, sila ay namumuwisan ng 25% ng kita bilang tenants ng CADP; at ang pagpapakansela ay batay lang din sa mga mali at gawa-gawa lamang na mga certifications ng HLURB at MPDC.

Kung kaya, kami po ay humihiling sa Korte Suprema, sa pangunguna ni Kagg. Hilario Davide, na imbestigahan at parusahan ang mga nasabing Court of Appeals Justices sa kawalan ng hustisya na kanilang ginagawa. Ang sadyang intensyong paglabag sa batas at pagmaniobra upang hindi takpan ang katotohanan ay magbubunga ng kamatayan sa mga biktimang magsasaka at manggagawang bukid sa bansa. Dapat ding imbestigahan ng Malacanang at Kongreso ang malawakang pagsabotahe at pagbibigo ng iba't-ibang ahensya ng gobyerno sa minimithi ng mga magsasaka na mapasakamay ang lupaing binubungkal. Kailangang palayasin at at bitayin ang mga tiwali na mga opisyal ng DAR, HLURB, etc. at repasuhin ang mga *Administrative Orders o Guidelines* na imbes *land distribution* ay *land return* at kamatayan ng mga magsasaka ang ibinubunga.

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ADVT

Masbate town a haven for manta rays

From page A1

triple this year because of the steady stream of tourists wanting a glimpse of the gentle pelagic creatures nestled in the "Manta Bowl."

"Just last week a group of 40 tourists arrived here, wanting to see them," he said.

According to Espinosa, the tourism boom in his town can be attributed to the media attention that the manta rays have been getting and the efforts of certain nongovernment organizations to bring them to national awareness.

The Manta Bowl is in Tacdugan Reef, 15 kilometers from Bulan, Sorsogon, and 10 km from Monreal town on Ticao island in Masbate.

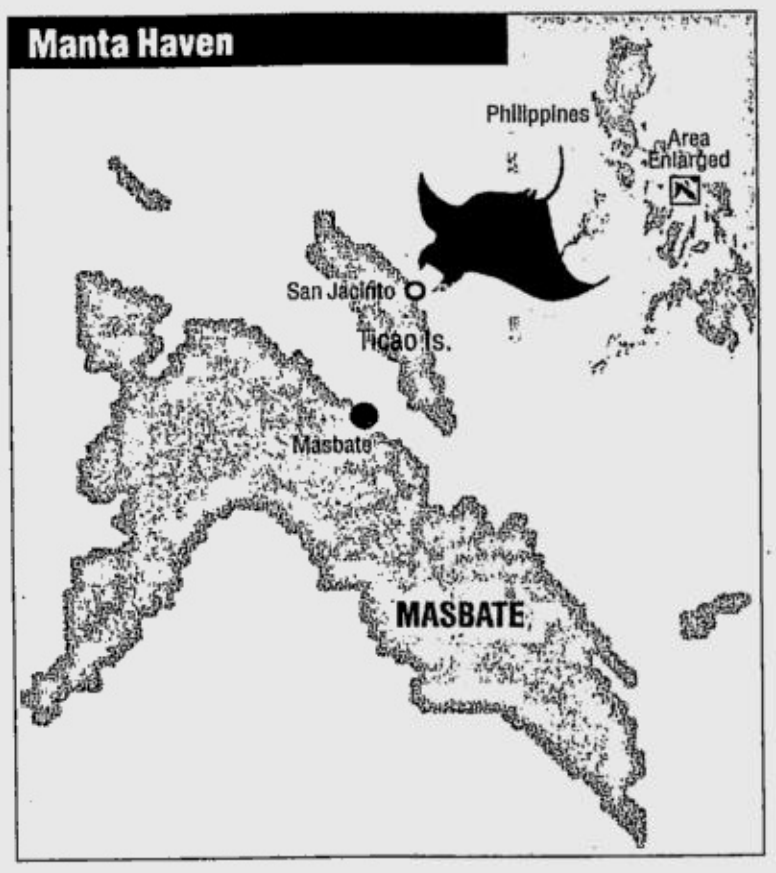
The manta ray *(Manta birostris)*, considered one of the five largest fish species in the world, can grow to eight meters in width and weigh up to over 400 kilos.

It feeds on plankton, small crustaceans and fish, but like other filter feeders, it has non-functional teeth and is no threat to larger sea creatures, unless threatened.

Unlike other rays, the manta tail has no spine.

Its powerful wings serve as its only defense. A blow from a wing of a full-grown manta carries a powerful punch.

Usually found in temperate and tropical waters near islands, manta rays migrate around the world, going where plankton abounds.



FOR SALE: Endangered manta rays priced at P1,000 each were waiting for their buyer when seized by environmentalists and authorities in Dalahican Port, Lucena City. TASK FORCE MATATAG

'Dive San Jacinto'

Espinosa said the discovery of the Manta Bowl put the virtually unknown town of San Jacinto on the map of Philippine tourist destinations.

"Our town is now known not only in the Philippines but perhaps also all over the world because of the presence of these endangered creatures and the sheer number of concentration in the Manta Bowl," he said.

There are also recorded sightings of giant manta rays in Tubbataha Reef in Sulu and in several reefs in Hawaii.

But the odds of seeing a manta ray in a single dive are greater in Tacdugan Reef than in any of the other sites, Espinosa said.

"We can now promote 'Dive San Jacinto' with the presence of these creatures," he said. "And the constant influx of tourists and divers will generate income both for the townfolk and the local government unit."

Espinosa, however, admitted that the town still lacked facilities for visitors' accommodations and for information dissemination among the townfolk on the protection of the manta rays.

"We have yet to receive the necessary financial assistance from the national government," he said.

The mayor also noted the danger posed by illegal fishing in the area of the Manta Bowl.

"We have captured some of these illegal fishers and we have banned the use of dynamite and cyanide for fishing," he said.

Lucky to see 2

Legazpi-based diver Rico Calleja, who frequents the Manta Bowl with tourists, said as many as seven or eight manta rays could be seen in the reef two years ago. But these days, he said, tourists would be lucky to see two, or even one.

"At other times, we could not find a single one," said Calleja, a member of the Professional Association of Diving Instructors.

Calleja said the destruction of the manta rays' natural habitat through dynamite fishing was the most probable cause of the depletion of manta rays in the area. On the other hand, he said, it could also mean that the creatures had migrated to other parts of the world.

But even if the manta rays are sometimes nowhere to be seen, tourists still come, Calleja said.

"Over the next years, we will see a still larger number of tourists and divers coming, wanting to see these creatures," he said, adding:

"Action to preserve these mantas should be done immediately."

Rays of Hope

Through the joint efforts of the Bicol Scuba Divers Foundation Inc. and the Makati-based Adventure Bound, Rays of Hope, a society of divers advocating the protection of the manta rays, was formed.

According to its founder, Conrad Paz, talks were conducted a few years ago with another group of like-minded divers from Ticao, but no concrete arrangements had been made until now.

But even without support from the local government, Paz said he and his colleagues were doing their best to save the manta rays, "using our own resources."

Other divers based in San Jacinto are also working for the conservation of the pelagic giants. They work for Bicol Adventures, which conducts diving tours at the Manta Bowl.

One of the divers said their leader, Marti Calleja, had consulted with Mayor Espinosa on how to protect the manta rays.

The diver said that while an agreement had been reached, problems regarding funding and personnel were getting in the way of implementation.

Both groups of divers agreed that the main problems were poaching and the locals' lack of concern for and knowledge about the manta rays.

Conservation program

Last April 19, another NGO composed of diving enthusiasts and environmentalists launched its own conservation program based on research and strong community participation.

Spearheaded by the Blue Zoo Heritage Society Inc., a Manila-based nonprofit group formed in October 2004, the Manta Ray Conservation Program is a 5-year project that will focus on research, both on the manta rays and on the circumstances of the inhabitants of Ticao island that may help transform them into active guardians of the creatures.

Blue Zoo member Mark Villanueva said research was a very significant component of the program because it would provide scientific information on the behavior, importance and role of the manta rays.

"This is a consolidated effort with the local government unit of the towns bordering the Manta Bowl, specifically San Jacinto. We're doing it for the people. It will be a long and arduous process but we have to do it," Villanueva said.

The conservation and research project has Masbate Rep. Narciso Bravo as chair and Mayor Espinosa vice chair.

After Donsol

Members include representatives of the Departments of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, and Education, Philippine National Police, NGOs, foundations, dive operators and national and local media outlets.

According to Congressman Bravo, the province of Masbate, especially the town of San Jacinto, will greatly benefit from Blue Zoo's program in terms of the promotion of ecotourism and livelihood opportunities.

"This project will not produce results overnight but over time, we will surely see positive results. We will pattern our plan of action on that of Donsol, which was very successful," he said.

Bravo said he would also reinforce the monitoring of illegal fishing and poaching in the area.

"We have received reports that manta rays are also present in waters off Burias island, so we are making sure they are also protected," he said.

Research facility

As a first step, the program has acquired a piece of land in Tacdogan beach. The property, which directly faces the Manta Bowl, was donated by Celestino Martinez Jr., a former representative of Bogo, Cebu.

"We are going to put up a manta ray research facility there," Blue Zoo's Villanueva said.

In an interview on Saturday, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said he would ensure the protection of the manta rays.

If you think April's hot, then watch out for May

From page A1

boiling between 36 and 37 degrees Celsius, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said yesterday.

Pagasa weather forecasting chief Herman Ngohayon said the highest temperatures during summer were usually recorded in May, not April as commonly perceived.

While the heat seemed unbearable the past few days, the temperature this month hovered just around 34 degrees Celsius.

The hottest day this year was recorded on April 10, with temperatures rising to 35.6 degrees Celsius in Quezon City.

"We still have not experienced the maximum temperature during summer. Normally, it comes in May, so expect that it will be hotter soon," Ngohayon told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Summer in the airport

This is scorching news for passengers and people working at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) because the heat inside the airport terminal building has become unbearable, no thanks to a 20-year-old air-conditioning system that can no longer keep up with the rising mercury.

A Filipino tourist checking in for her 2 p.m. flight to Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday described the feeling as "torture."

"I think the air-con is not proportionate to the volume of people [here]. Is there a move to improve facilities?" she asked the INQUIRER.

Aging air-con

An airline official who has worked at the Naia for nearly two decades said in a separate interview that the situation was nothing new.

"It's been like this every summer for the last 18 years I have been working here. When it's summer outside, it's also summer inside the building. When it's December, it's also cool in here," he said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach the airport authority's assistant general manager for engineering, Elpidio Mendoza, who sent word that he was in a meeting.

Another ranking official sought by the INQUIRER for comment admitted that the cooling system of the airport building was rather old and should be replaced.

"This building and its facilities are more than 20 years old. We should be replacing a lot of things here," the official said.

The Naia was built in the late '70s and was then considered one of the best in Asia. Through the years it has lagged behind the international airports of its neighboring countries.

Occasional showers

But while it continues to sizzle in Metro Manila, parts of Luzon and the Visayas will enjoy brief and sporadic rainshowers and thunderstorms this week due to the intense heat.

Pagasa said the localized convective activity in central and northern Luzon and some parts of Visayas would produce occasional showers that would last 15 to 30 minutes.

Localized convective activity pertains to the process that produces rain, such as the evaporation of water due to intense heat, forming clouds that will condense and cause rainshowers in small, specific areas.

Residents of Diliman, Quezon City, for example, experienced 30 minutes of heavy rain at around 3:30 a.m. yesterday, but the downpour did not cover Novaliches.

Colder in extreme north

Mindanao will experience clear days with the movement of the inter-tropical convergence zone away from the country's southern island group.

It will be colder in the extreme north of Luzon as the tailend of another cold front from Taiwan hits the Batanes islands.

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DLI Amoxicillin susp. 125 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 35.10	98.50	63.40/bot
DLI Amoxicillin susp. 250 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 45.10	144.00	98.90/bot
DLI Ampicillin cap. 500 mg	✓ 6.50	14.15	7.65/cap
DLI Chloramphenicol cap. 500 mg	✓ 3.20	37.75	34.55/cap
DLI Chloramphenicol susp. 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml	✓ 40.40	394.75	354.35/bot
DLI Co-trimoxazole tab (TM-160mg SMZ-800mg)	✓ 2.30	26.00	23.70/tab
DLI Co-trimoxazole cap. (TM-80mg SMZ-400mg)	✓ 2.10	14.80	12.70/cap
DLI Co-trimoxazole susp. (TM-40mg SMZ-200mg)	✓ 25.40	115.75	90.35/bot
Anti-cough (Para sa Ubo)			
DLI Bromhexine HCL syrup 4 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 25.40	74.75	49.35/bot
DLI Carbocisteine cap. 500 mg	✓ 2.10	12.25	10.15/cap
DLI Carbocisteine susp. 100 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 24.00	87.25	63.25/bot
Anti-diarrhea (Para sa Pagtatae)			
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PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR
No. 10, s-2005

TO : INDIVIDUALLY PAYING MEMBERS, ACCREDITED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, PHILHEALTH-NCR GROUP, PHILHEALTH REGIONAL OFFICES, CLAIMS PROCESSING UNITS AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : Amendment to PhilHealth Circular No. 25, s-2001 regarding Clarifications on the Eligibility of Individually Paying Members and their Dependents to Medicare Coverage

Relative to the adoption of the Auto Debit Arrangement (ADA) with the accredited collecting agent and implementation of the Over-the-Counter Collection System (OTCCS) to facilitate processing of payment transactions, Item 8.0 (Requirements in the availment of Medicare Benefits) of PhilHealth Circular No. 25, s-2001 dated 9 August 2001 shall now read as follows:

> To avail of the benefits, Individually Paying Members (IPMs) shall be required to submit, as proof of payment and eligibility, copy of any of the following: machine validated MI-5, machine printed receipt, Government Official Receipt, bank/agent receipt, PhilHealth Bank Receipt, PhilHealth Agent's Receipt, bank passbook, or PhilHealth Official Receipt representing at least three (3) monthly contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of availment.

All other provisions of PhilHealth Circular No. 25, s-2001 consistent with this issuance shall remain in full force and effect.

For information and guidance of all concerned.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, M.D., MSc.
Secretary
President and CEO

Taal mayor suspended

By Nelson F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday suspended for 90-days the mayor of Taal, Batangas in connection to the alleged purchase of some P500,000 worth of medicines from a pharmaceutical company owned by a relative.

The Sandiganbayan fourth division denied the request of Mayor Librado Cabrera that he be suspended for just 30 days because the duration of preventive suspension was three months.

The anti-graft court, quoting a decision by the Supreme Court, said they had no choice but to impose administrative sanction since Cabrera himself had conceded that the "preventive suspension is mandatory in character and that there are no ifs and buts about it."

In July 2002, government lawyers had accused Cabrera of buying P503,000 worth of medicines from January to June 1998 from Diamond Laboratories, which is owned by a relative.

In a five-page decision, the Sandiganbayan directed Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez to enforce the suspension order and inform the court of the action taken within five days from receipt of the suspension order.

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FACT FINDING RECOMMENDATION

Probers want 7 Abu jail guards, officials charged

By Nelson F. Flores

THE FACT-FINDING team that investigated the bloody March 14 escape attempt by members of the Abu Sayyaf from the Metro Manila District Jail (MMDJ) at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City has recommended the filing of administrative charges against seven jail officials and guards.

In his report to Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, fact-finding team head Interior Undersecretary for Peace and Order Marius Corpus said a failure of intelligence and lack of personnel largely contributed to creating the situation that led to the escape attempt by the Abu Sayyaf members led by Commanders Kosovo, Global and Robot.

The incident left 25 people—including the three Abu Sayyaf leaders, one policeman and three jail guards—dead and two other guards wounded.

Security lapses

The report said other factors that contributed to the incident were the lax implementation of jail rules and regulations and the lack of adequate jail facilities and basic security equipment.

The probers noted that there were lapses in security procedures during the serving of meals; MMDJ officials had failed to perform assigned tasks and responsibilities; and basic rules were not observed leading to a clear failure of intelligence and low morale among employees.

Consequently, the fact-finding team recommended the filing of administrative charges against Jail Superintendent Romeo Elisan Jr., J/Chief Insp. Jaime Aquino, JO2 Danilo Andres, and JO1s Albert Lobrio, Allan Sta. Cruz, Ricarte Laxamana and Homer Omega for gross neglect of duty, inefficiency and incompetence in the performance of their duties.

The report also said the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology was undermanned by at least 33,000 personnel nationwide.

Undermanned

The BJMP needs at least 40,000 employees to manage the country's inmate population of 60,397 but the bureau only has 6,796 uniformed and non-uniformed personnel.

As far as the MMDJ was concerned, the report said the bureau was undermanned by at least 500 personnel.

Currently, the MMDJ has an inmate population of 1,420 with only about 100 BJMP personnel guarding them.

Ideally, the ratio should be one guard for seven inmates for three shifts. Hence, the BJMP needs more than 600 guards to oversee the current jail population.

The lack of guards led to the practice of using inmates as "trustees" or "errand boys" who were usually given the keys to the gates and cells in clear violation of BJMP regulations.

The multi-agency fact-finding team also learned that the overwhelming number of visitors to the MMDJ jail made it impossible for the guards to thoroughly inspect everyone, enabling some visitors to smuggle contraband like guns into the jail.

The fact-finding team, composed of representatives from the DILG, Department of Justice, National Bureau of Investigation and Philippine National Police, also noted that the existing jail infrastructure was no longer adequate to cope with the growing jail population. Basic logistical requirements like firearms, handcuffs, communication equipment and vehicles were inadequate, it said.

The fact-finding team also recommended that BJMP Director Arturo Alit and his deputy for operations, Chief Supt. Clarito Jover, be admonished.

On the other hand, it recommended that J/Chief Insp. Reyno Damaso and JO1s Sheroky Bilibi and Manuel Loyola Jr. be given the highest award for their prompt and heroic actions during the siege.

At the same time, the fact-finding team recommended improvements in BJMP operations.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Syrian troops formally quit Lebanon

RAYAQ, Lebanon—Syria was sending off the last of its troops in Lebanon at a military ceremony on Tuesday, heralding the end of its 29-year military presence and ushering in a new era for its tiny neighbor.

The final 300 Syrian soldiers were to cross the border back home after the ceremony at a military air base in the eastern town of Rayaq in the presence of the top army brass from both countries.

The withdrawal was carried out under fierce international and domestic pressure following the February killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri that plunged the country into turmoil unseen since the end of the 1975-1990 civil war.

"Straight after the ceremony, Syrian forces will leave and there will no longer be a single Syrian soldier or intelligence agent in Lebanon after that," the Lebanese army's communications director General Elias Farhat told AFP.

Later Tuesday, UN chief Kofi Annan is to deliver his report on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1559 which calls for the pullout of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

The press highlighted the "historic" pullout but focused too on challenges ahead, including holding elections next month, sorting out the debt-ridden economy and redefining relations with Syria, which has held political and military sway in Lebanon for three decades.

"Today, as the last Syrian troops depart from the country they have occupied for 29 years, the Lebanese will likely breathe a sigh of relief," said the English-language Daily Star newspaper.

"But they won't have much time to savor the sweetness of their newfound liberty; they are now left with the task of managing their own affairs, and there is an awful lot of work to be done."

Lebanon's parliament was to begin debating the new government's policy statement ahead of a confidence vote expected the next day, paving the way for the adoption of a new law to allow elections to go ahead as planned by the end of May.

The United States said it was concerned over Syria's continuing interference in Lebanon.

"If the Syrian military forces get out, it will be a big step but the jury is still out on whether Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs has come to an end," said a US State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"And that will be determined by whether its intelligence forces are out and whether it allows Lebanon to have elections that are based solely on what the Lebanese want and not what others want."

Syria has wound up the withdrawal ahead of schedule, having pledged on April 3 to complete the operation by the end of the month. *AFP*

LEBANESE army troops are met by a joyful crowd after they took over a Syrian intelligence post in Chtaura in the Bekaa valley. REUTERS

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73 dead in Japan rail crash

AMAGASAKI—Japanese police looking for clues to the cause of the country's worst rail crash in more than 40 years raided the offices of the train's operator on Tuesday as weeping relatives claimed the remains of many of the 73 confirmed dead from a makeshift morgue.

Investigations were focusing on the speed at which the crowded train was traveling when it jumped the tracks on the outskirts of the western city of Osaka and smashed into an apartment building just after rush hour on Monday morning.

Police investigating for possible professional negligence lugged away boxes of documents from the offices of West Japan Railway Co. (JR West).

JR West President Takeshi Kakiuchi will resign to take responsibility for the disaster, in which another 440 people were injured, Kyodo news agency quoted a company official as saying.

At the accident scene, workers in hard hats were using heavy machinery to take apart and remove one of the cars, while safety investigators inspected and photographed the site.

Nearby, local people laid flowers against a fence and bowed their heads in prayer for the victims.

Television showed a man crouched and weeping outside the gymnasium where the bodies of most of the dead were taken.

"As I watched the news reports this morning I gradually became angry and I'm wondering what to do," a middle-aged man who lost his wife told reporters.

"The driver was young and I wonder about the training."

Two women and a man were pulled alive from the wreckage earlier on Tuesday but even 30 hours after the crash police could not say for sure that all of the dead and injured had been extracted from the mass of crumpled and twisted metal.

Investigators said the cause of the crash was still unclear, but survivors among the some 580 passengers, as well as the train's conductor, said they believed the train was going faster than normal after falling behind schedule.

The train had overshot the previous station by about 40 meters and had to reverse back to the platform.

The driver, a 23-year-old man with 11 months' experience, was retrieved from the wreckage on Tuesday morning, but a police spokesperson could not confirm whether he was alive or dead.

The same driver also over-shot a station by 100 meters last June, railway officials said. *Reuters*

Michael Jackson's ex-wife to testify at child sex trial

SANTA MARIA, California—Michael Jackson's ex-wife Debbie Rowe will be allowed to deliver potentially explosive testimony against the star at his child sex trial, the judge ruled Monday.

The key ruling came as prosecutors prepared to wrap up their nine-week case against the "King of Pop," opening the way for the defense to hit back at the charges against him.

"I will admit testimony in that case" from Rowe, Judge Rodney Melville said, adding that he would seek ways to limit the scope of her evidence after defense attorneys warned that it would open "a giant can of worms."

Prosecutor Ron Zonen said Rowe would tell jurors that Jackson asked her to make a video praising him in early 2003 and told her she would be allowed to visit her children if she did.

Zonen said Rowe's testimony would show how the Jackson camp "used children like pawns" to elicit enthusiastic positive statements about the beleaguered pop icon.

Extracts of Rowe's interview were played on a US television show that Jackson had made following the broadcast of a damaging British documentary in February 2003. The documentary sparked the child sex investigation against him.

JACKSON AP

Jackson is accused of plotting to kidnap his 13-year-old sex accuser and the boy's family in February and March 2003 to force them to make a video aimed at dispelling suspicion over the star's relationship with the youth. *AFP*

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US clears soldiers in Italian agent's Iraq death

WASHINGTON—US investigators have found that American troops who shot dead an Italian agent after he secured the release of an abducted journalist did nothing wrong and will not be disciplined, an Army official said on Monday.

But Italy disagrees with findings in the preliminary report by the US military investigators and has balked at endorsing it, added the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

US troops accidentally killed Italian intelligence officer Nicola Calipari when they opened fire on a car heading for Baghdad airport in which he was escorting Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena, who had just been released.

The friendly fire incident has caused tension between the United States and Italy, one of Washington's staunchest allies in Iraq. Calipari, hailed as an Italian national hero, was fatally wounded as he threw his body over Sgrena to protect her from a hail of bullets.

Sgrena, an award-winning journalist, was held hostage by insurgents for a month before Calipari masterminded her release. She was wounded but survived.

The Army official said Italy was disputing two factual issues in the report: the car's speed as it approached the checkpoint; and the nature of communications between the Italians and US forces before the incident. *Reuters*

SPACE IMAGE REUTERS
A new view of the Eagle Nebula, one of the two largest and sharpest images Hubble Space Telescope has ever taken, is released by Nasa on Hubble's 15th anniversary April 25.

WORLDBRIEFS

No WMD in Iraq

WASHINGTON—Wrapping up his investigation into Saddam Hussein's purported arsenal, the CIA's top weapons hunter in Iraq said his search for weapons of mass destruction "has been exhausted" without finding any. Nor did he find any evidence that such weapons were shipped officially from Iraq to Syria to be hidden before the US invasion, but he couldn't rule out some unofficial transfer of limited WMD-related materials. Charles Duelfer, head of the Iraq Survey Group, closed his effort with words of caution about potential future threats and careful assessment of this and other unanswered questions. The Bush administration justified its 2003 invasion of Iraq as necessary to eliminate Hussein's purported stockpile of WMD. "After more than 18 months, the WMD investigation and debriefing of the WMD-related detainees has been exhausted," he said. *AP*

Still no Iraqi gov't

BAGHDAD—Iraqi politicians again delayed naming a government on Monday, prolonging a three-month political vacuum seen aiding an insurgency, but a senior politician said a Cabinet could come as soon as Tuesday. Jawad al-Maliki, a top member of the main Shiite alliance that won January's elections, said wrangling over appointments to key ministries had put off Monday's expected announcement of a proposed Cabinet. Lawmakers say the main Shiite alliance has moved to form a government with the Kurds and minority Sunni Muslims, after rejecting demands by caretaker Prime Minister Iyad Allawi that his party receive at least four Cabinet ministries. Lawmakers said that the Shiites would get the interior ministry, which handles internal security. It was unclear who would get the crucial oil and defense ministries. *Reuters*

New Ecuador president

QUITO—Ecuador's new president on Monday vowed to complete the last two years of his predecessor's term and dismissed calls for early elections and international concern over his government's legitimacy. Alfredo Palacio, named president last week after Congress fired former leader Lucio Gutierrez, insisted the transfer of power was legal. "We must comply with the constitution. The vice president replaces the president for the rest of the period," said Palacio, a doctor who was Gutierrez's vice president. "My commitment to the constitution, to Ecuador's laws, to international laws and our international commitments, justifies my presence here in the post of president," he told reporters. Gutierrez fled Quito for asylum in Brazil on Sunday four days after public protests against his government forced him from power. *Reuters*

Bush seeks lower oil prices

CRAWFORD, Texas—US President George W. Bush welcomed Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz to his Texas ranch Monday, saying he would press his guest on high oil prices and increasing the kingdom's output. The two leaders, meeting for the second time at Bush's Prairie Chapel estate, were also to seek common ground on the war on terrorism, the pace of democratic reforms in the Middle East, and the peace process there. Bush, awaiting Abdullah's arrival, told reporters that "the crown prince understands that it's very important for there to be a—to make sure prices are reasonable. A high oil price will damage markets, and he knows that." "We'll talk about his country's capacity. It's an important subject," said Bush *AFP*

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ISSN 0116-2642 INQUIRER Vol. 20 No. 138

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OPINION

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8800 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

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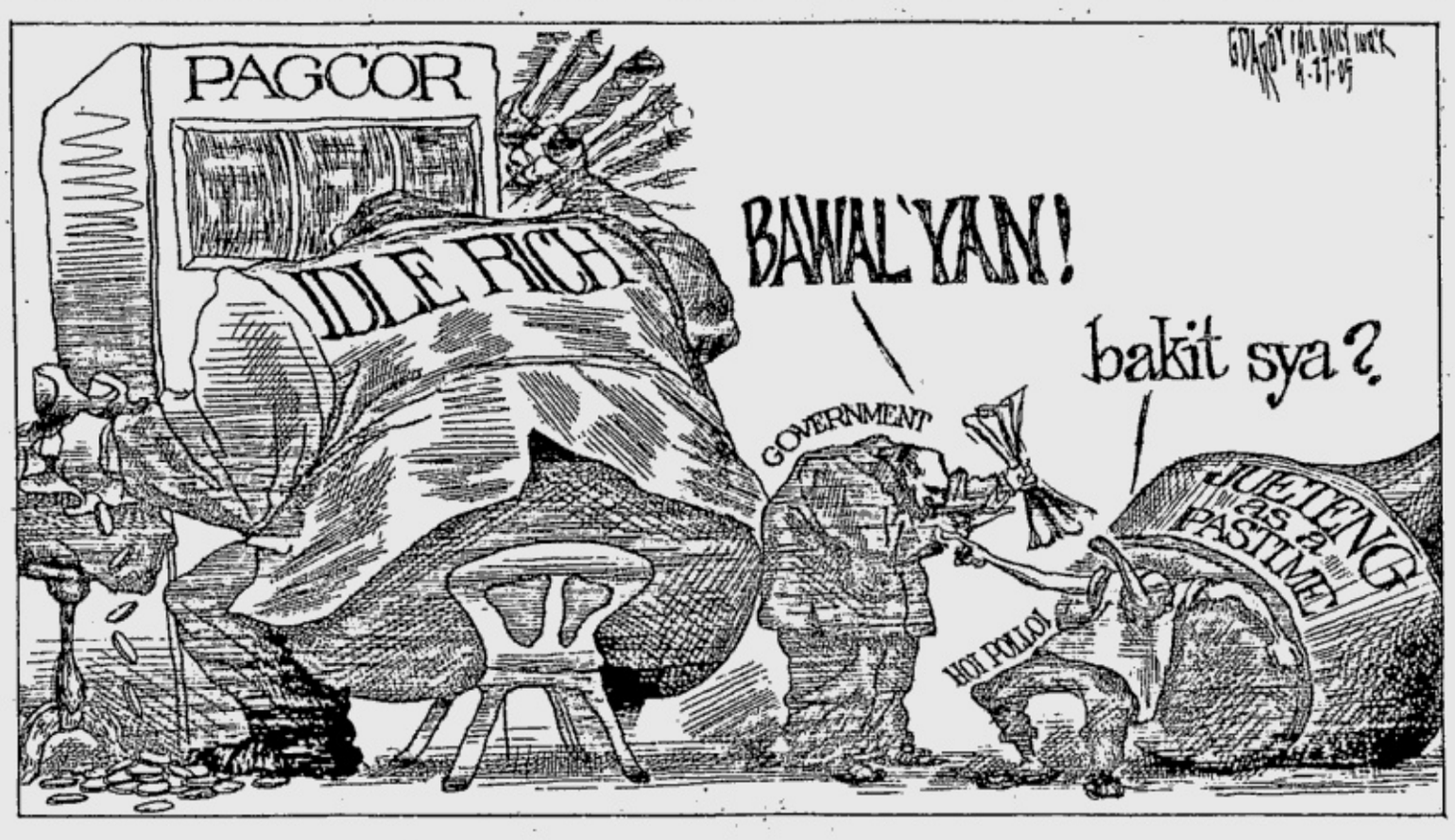


Liquidating liberty

EDITORIAL

HAVING endured warrantless arrests, the systematic detention of political dissidents, and having endured case after case of torture and "salvaging" or summary execution, our country has a historic obligation to reject and resist human rights violations and summary, politically motivated executions. This historical burden lies heaviest on government officials and the military because of their shameful, institutional, martial law record.

The efforts of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, commander of the 8th Infantry Division, based in Catbalogan, Samar, who has announced that he will crush insurgency within six months to a year, is a particular cause for worry. Military operations in Eastern Visayas have been intensified; and, as our series of reports point out, members affiliated with the various organizations of the National Democratic Front claim that Palparan is systematically hunting down not the troops of the New People's Army (although he is doing that, too), but literally gunning for leaders in aboveground, and thus legitimate, groups that call themselves "people's organizations."

The Commission on Human Rights is pretty clear on this point. It has expressed alarm over what Commissioner Dominador Calamba II has called the "seemingly systematic" series of liquidations of activists. Since this year began, at least 20 leaders and members of militant groups have been killed across the country. The killers are largely suspected to have links with the military. Calamba points out that "Those being killed are all members of Bayan Muna." The human rights group Karapatan has noted that the victims were affiliated with party-list groups Bayan Muna and Anakpawis and organizations such as Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

The killings aren't isolated incidents, either in terms of numbers or locality. One activist was killed in January, eight in February, nine in March and two in April. The assassinations took place in Baguio City, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Bataan, Quezon, Camarines Norte, Cebu, Leyte and Samar. Militant leaders and their friends suggest that they have been targeted for liquidation ever since tacit alliance between the present administration and the NDF against Joseph Estrada broke up in 2001, soon after President Macapagal-Arroyo gained power. Since 2001, groups such as Plaridel count 51 coordinators and members of Bayan Muna and 19 from its allied party-list group Anakpawis as having been killed, with another 10 people abducted and still missing.

Calamba says he's sure some sort of liquidation plan is being carried out, but that, "the soldiers we interviewed say that the New People's Army is the one [responsible]. They say the [leftists] were out there killing each other."

But while it's true that the CPP-NPA has a dismal history of violently purging its own members, would it go so far as to kill its own allies, in order to accuse the government of a systematic attempt to wipe out its leaders?

Palparan's rhetoric has convinced many observers of the military's possible motive: to defeat the insurgency in its centers of power, such as Samar. Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño has quoted Palparan as saying that "the real leaders behind the revolution are the ones in the militant organizations, those who organize rallies." Since everyone assumes the military has the means, either to coddle armed assassins or to coddle their coddlers in the civilian ranks of government, and has an obsessive desire to crush the CPP-NPA by any means, fair or foul, it makes the AFP a likely suspect. Or, to be precise, a more willing tool: the chief suspect of leftists being the administration itself.

Whatever the truth—if the CPP-NPA is in another round of purges and pinning the blame on the AFP, or the AFP is running amok in the provinces, liquidating aboveground activists—the fact is that something is going on, and it demands a clear statement of policy from the President. It is not for the military or officials to judge the sincerity of leftists engaged in legal politics; all anyone needs to know is that legal organizations, of whatever persuasion, operating in the full light of day, deserve full protection of the law and a guarantee of the free exercise of their constitutional rights. They are being denied those rights. They must have them.

GMA should show sincerity in cutting costs

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

BEFORE THE BICAMERAL conference committee meeting, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she didn't care if the expanded value added tax is 10 or 12 percent as long as it would raise P80 billion. Last Thursday, however, she insisted that it should be 12 percent and should raise revenues of P118 to P135 billion!

It is no longer surprising for the President to change her mind. This is not the first time she did it. She has made turnabouts so often that the people already take them for granted. Like the boy who cried wolf, they don't believe her anymore.

She wants a bigger VAT because her administration is bankrupt. She spent all the money during the election campaign. Now she wants to squeeze more from the people. She tells them to make sacrifices for the country, be patriotic and pay more taxes.

The people would make sacrifices if they see that everybody else does, including her administration. They will gladly cough up more taxes if they see that their money is not being wasted. They will tighten their belts if they see that the government is also tightening its own belt. They won't mind paying more if they see the government cutting costs. But what they see is continued wasteful spending.

If only the government would show sincerity in reducing expenses. For example, had GMA vetoed the pork barrel, the people would have seen that she really wanted to save funds. Had Congress removed it totally and drastically reduced the allowances of all government officials, the taxpayers would have seen that they themselves were willing to make sacrifices.

But as of now, the legislators have no moral right to pass bills increasing taxes. Except for Senators Panfilo Lacson, Alfredo Lim and Franklin Drilon, the others don't want to let go of their pork.

Neither does the President have any moral right to ask the people to pay more taxes for as long as she continues to spend their money wantonly. Every time she travels abroad or to the provinces, she spends millions of pesos of taxpayers' money. Unlike other officials, she cannot travel without armies of security personnel and *alalay* and other officials accompanying her—and that costs a lot of money.

Were all those trips necessary? Maybe the trips for the funeral of Pope John Paul II and for the Asia-African summit were, but most of the rest were not. They were just a waste of money.

What does she do when she goes to the provinces? She cuts ceremonial ribbons, delivers speeches, shakes hands, has her picture taken so she would be in the newspapers and TV the next day. She thinks she is doing her job. No, she is not. She is only wasting our money and her time.

Those trips don't accomplish anything much. Her job is to stay in the center of government and run it efficiently. Doesn't she realize that her government is falling apart? Nobody is telling her officials what to do. I mean, really giving them meaningful directions. Her administration is like a symphony orchestra without a conductor, each member playing his own tune and the whole ensemble creating cacophony instead of harmony.

But maybe she is really escaping her responsibilities when she goes to the provinces. Who wants to stay in the snake pit that is Malacañang?

* * *

Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez sent a rebuttal to an item here several days ago. That item was about the Senate investigation of the Standard Chartered Bank that resulted in eight officials of the bank being cited for contempt and detained for six hours. Chavez is the lawyer of the two complainants in that case.

Chavez said Standard Chartered has been administratively sanctioned by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Bangko Sentral in the past. He said these are the undisputed facts supported by records:

1. The SEC's Money Market Operations Department issued a memo to the SEC commissioner on Sept. 2, 1997 recommending the issuance of a cease and desist order (CDO) against the bank because it was found selling unregistered securities in violation of Sections 4 (a) and 19 of the Revised Securities Act.

2. The Bangko Sentral warned Standard Chartered on Aug. 19, 1999 not to include investments in global mutual funds issued abroad in its investment portfolio unless these funds are registered with the SEC. On Oct. 27, 2000, the bank was fined P30,000 by the Monetary Board for non-compliance with the Bangko Sentral's directive prohibiting it offering global mutual funds to its trust clients and for its failure to comply with its own undertaking not to offer such investments.

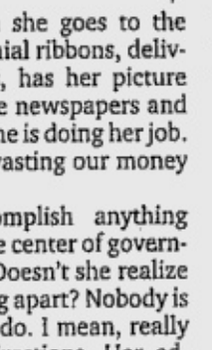
3. The SEC issued a CDO against Standard Chartered on Dec. 4, 2003 in which the SEC found that "in utter violation of the Securities and Regulation Code and disregard of the authority of the regulatory agencies," Standard Chartered continuously dealt with the unregistered securities despite the Bangko Sentral's directive, "imposition of the corresponding penalty and the bank's full knowledge that a prior registration with the commission of securities must be made before the same can be offered to the public. The series of events indubitably show that the bank is totally aware of its securities and banking law infractions in dealing with unregistered securities."

4. Standard Chartered settled with the SEC for P7 million to avoid administrative investigation. In so doing, it virtually admitted its guilt in the investment "scam."

Chavez also said that the dismissed court cases against Standard Chartered are still on appeal, and that his client Manuel Baviera has won his labor case. This, however, is also on appeal.

Still, impunity

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I OFFER my deepest condolences to the family of Alicia Ramos, assistant foreign secretary, who was murdered in her home last weekend. As everyone knows by now, what happened was this:

When Alicia's younger sister Leticia opened the gate to their house in Makati last Sunday to sweep their front yard, as was her daily wont, three men jumped her and dragged her inside. They gagged her and tied her up. The men then went upstairs to the second floor and found Alicia in her room. The two unmarried sisters were the sole occupants of the house. No one knows if Alicia resisted or tried to scream. What everyone knows is that the men strangled her with a towel.

It is possible that they panicked. There were cigarette butts all over the place to suggest the state of their nervousness and agitation. They did not strangle Leticia to begin with, though they probably would have done so after they killed Alicia that way. Fortunately for Leticia, she managed to loosen her bonds and run to the nearest police station. That the robbers might have been amateurs is bolstered by the fact that they robbed the place clumsily, leaving a lot of valuable stuff untouched.

But whether they strangled Alicia out of agitation or deliberation, the results remain grim. Alicia, whom her colleagues describe as quiet and brilliant, is dead, another statistic in the rising death toll in this country.

I particularly sympathize with the victims because the same thing happened to our office some years ago, with less tragic results. At least objectively—the trauma suffered by our staff who went through the ordeal was incalculable. It was the same modus operandi.

It was a weekend too, though I am not so sure now whether it was a Saturday or a Sunday. As was his daily wont, our housekeeper opened the gate to our office in Pagasa, Quezon City—a fairly big place that housed two NGOs—to water the plants outside. This was well before tricycles made the street in front of our office their parking lot, which made it a lot safer, if a lot noisier. At the time, there weren't too many people outside, it was around 6:30 in the morning.

As our housekeeper recounted later, he saw two men across the street talking and a couple of other men walking past our gate. He didn't pay them any mind until one of the men walking past our gate turned back and pulled a gun on him. They shoved him inside our compound, and several other men followed. Our housekeeper lived with his family in a small room at the back of our office. His family included his wife, daughter and infant son. One of our staff, Romel Lalata (now the editor of Libre), had the misfortune to sleep in our office the night before. As did a friend of his, who was passing through. Romel was up and about, typing in front of the computer when the intruders barged in and poked a gun to his face. He swears it took him several seconds to comprehend what was happening.

The robbers threatened to knife our housekeeper's wife and their kids if she could not stop her infant son's crying. For a long time afterward, she had bad dreams and slept fitfully, roused to sudden wakefulness by the slightest noise. The robbers hogtied all the men and left them on the floor. Our housekeeper had the darkest time of his life when the robbers walked past with hammers in their hands. He waited for a blow to smash his head in, but none came. It turned out that the robbers needed the hammers to pry loose our safe. They wrecked it, as well as the one upstairs kept by the other NGO. They took out the cash in both, which came up to only a few thousand pesos.

They left also after clumsily rummaging through the house, leaving valuable stuff behind. We reported the crime to the cops that same morning, and almost instantly regretted it. They immediately theorized "inside job" and took that line of questioning. They never caught the robbers, though the crime was never repeated in the neighborhood.

It is possible the gang that struck in Makati last weekend is the same one, plying their malevolent trade over the years from place to place. But I deeply commiserate with the Ramoses because their ordeal had far more tragic results.

I go back to what I said last Thursday, which is that we cannot let government off the hook for the alarming state of criminality in the country today. If Ramos' murder happened like a thunderbolt on a sunny day, then we might apply ourselves only to asking for the heads of the murderers, metaphorically or otherwise. But her murder happened alongside a tsunami of murders that has engulfed the country over the past year. It happened alongside the routine gunning down of political figures, journalists and human rights activists. Reporters Without Borders rightly assigns the blame to a "culture of impunity": murderers are free to murder without fear of being caught.

To repeat my point last Thursday, the BIR has been busy loudly threatening taxpayers with reprisal if they do not pay their correct taxes. Well, the concept, which seems to have eluded government, is that we pay taxes so that we may at least not be strangled in our sleep—quite literally in Alicia Ramos' case. Taxes are not government's natural due. They are not tribute, or gratuity, or *balato*. They are premised on government giving us back roads, clinics and peace of mind. We do not pay taxes just so the President's husband can spend them on $20,000-a-night suites. No taxation without representation, no appropriation without compensation. Demanding money from the citizens without assuring their safety and well-being is not taxing people, it is taxing patience. It is not taxes, it is *tong*.

It's not just individuals we may not allow to get away with murder. It's government, too.

Nostalgia trip

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE SUMMIT OF 90 Asian and African leaders in Jakarta at the weekend to mark the 50th anniversary of the historic Asian-African conference in Bandung in 1955 attempted to revive the Bandung spirit but ended as a trip to nostalgia. The theme of the summit, "Reinvigorating the Bandung Spirit: Working Towards a New Asian-African Partnership," sought to mark the dawn of a "new era of cooperation among countries of the two regions towards a peaceful and prosperous future."

The 1955 Bandung conference was attended by representatives of just 29 countries of East Asia, Africa and the Middle East, including the Philippines. Fifty years later, the goal of forging cooperation between Asia and Africa, home to 4.6 billion people many of them from the poorest countries of the world, remains a distant dream.

In a speech at the signing ceremony for the "New Strategic Partnership," Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said: "History will judge us on the basis of what we do in the days, months and years ahead—whether we are true to the Bandung spirit, or we will fail through the failure of political nerve."

The first Bandung conference marked the symbolic end of Western colonialism as most of the 29 countries that participated had just won their independence. The context of the 2005 summit represented a world that has changed profoundly since 1955. The summit convened under the shadow of nostalgia best described by Roeslan Abdulgani, secretary general of the first conference, who said he was pessimistic about long-term results from the summit.

"The situation is so different," he said. In 1955, "I saw giants," such as Chou Enlai of China, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, and Sukarno of Indonesia. "But their successors, gathering in Jakarta today are just half giants, although that is better than dwarfs."

Yudhoyono said, "We have to ensure that the Asia-Africa summit is not just a ceremonial event. In the past, we fought together to get independence. Today, we face the same challenge—that is fighting global injustice in the form of poverty and underdevelopment."

The first Bandung conference was convened in the context of the Cold War, in which the newly independent nations of Asia were polarized along the lines of alignment with the West or non-alignment. In that circumstance, the Philippines was identified as aligned with the United States, Sukarno and Nehru were at the forefront of what was to become the Non-Aligned Movement that sought to steer clear of the West-East conflict. Sukarno, stamping his mark as one of Asia's nationalist leaders in the post-World War II period, said the Bandung conference was the "first intercontinental meeting of colored peoples in the history of mankind."

Addressing that meeting, Sukarno noted that "for many generations our peoples have been the voiceless of the world." He then called for cohesion among Asian and African countries forming an independent third world. "Let us not be bitter about the past, but let us keep our eyes firmly on the future.... Let us remember, sisters and brothers, that for the sake of all, we Asians and Africans must be united."

Following the winning of independence of more African and Asian nations after 1955, the arrival of a new age of development weakened Asian-African solidarity. Ten years after Bandung, Indonesia sought to celebrate its 10th anniversary with a conference in an African venue, Algiers, in June 1965. But by then, cracks had begun to appear in the initial cohesion of the original group.

The fissure was opened in June when President Ahmed Ben Bella of Algiers was overthrown in a bloodless coup by Col. Houari Boumedienne, the army commander and defense minister. The coup lent an air of uncertainty to the holding of the conference.

By then the Cold War was no longer sharply defined by the conflict between East and West. A new dimension had developed: the Soviet-Chinese split. This split caused realignments and fractures among the non-aligned nations. Sukarno had become radicalized. He abandoned strict non-alignment and leaned toward alignment with China as he assumed leadership of what he called the new emerging forces (NEFO) which he wanted to replace the United Nations.

A new balance between Asia and Africa emerged in 1965 in Algiers. At the first Bandung conference, 23 Asian countries, which had won independence, made up the majority, with only six African countries represented.

At Algiers, 35 African countries, which had gained independence, were invited as against 25 Asian countries. Algiers marked the dawn of African assertiveness in the struggle to end Western colonial rule. Thus, the first Bandung was correctly described a an Asian-African conference, and the Algiers conference as an African-Asian summit.

The coup in Algiers created not only uncertainty over its success but also saw the emergence of crisscrossing cleavage lines that divided the African states into the Francophone bloc and the Commonwealth bloc aligned with the British Commonwealth countries in Asia and Africa. India, a leading light in the first meeting, led a bloc at Algiers that favored the inclusion of the Soviet Union in the conference, a move opposed by China, an original Bandung power, on account of its conflict with the USSR. In Algiers, India abandoned its non-alignment. The Chinese attack on Indian border troops antagonized India and forced India to take an antagonistic position toward China and prompted it to lead moderate forces in Algiers, including the Philippines. The different ideological and political tendencies that emerged at Algiers showed the fault lines of attaining Asian-African solidarity.

Against this background of fissures, the 50th anniversary of the Bandung conference faces a dim prospect of ever reviving the original Bandung spirit.

'Parang jueteng'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MARINA (not her real name) is a volunteer health worker in a barangay in Manila and, as such, counsels and provides services to her neighbors regarding their health problems. But just the other week, she recounts, she herself was in need of dire assistance.

Her problem began, she said, when she went to the City Health Office of Manila to attend a lecture on natural family planning. In her 30s, Marina said she was already in search of an alternative family planning method and, with her husband, decided to give NFP a try. But soon Marina began to experience side-effects that NFP promoters don't mention: uncertainty, anxiety, depression. Fairly regular in her periods, Marina became alarmed when her period failed to arrive five days after it was supposed to.

"So I went to Quiapo," she recalled, mainly to canvas for concoctions that could help her out of her problem. When Marina approached a vendor, the vendor merely grunted: "Irregular *o* delayed?" When Marina replied "delayed," the vendor offered a bottle of medication that, she said, should bring on the onset of menstruation. "But my problem was, the vendor wanted P120 and all I had with me at the time was just enough money for my family's food that day. The choice before me was: food or the medication?"

As Marina tells it, this is a choice that women in her community confront every day. Not just food or abortive drugs, but really survival today or starvation tomorrow? And also: their own survival and safety or their family's future?

* * *

"*PARANG jueteng,*" is how Marina describes the issue of abortion among urban poor—and even rural poor—women.

"*Bawal,* illegal *pero ginagawa* (Forbidden, illegal but still being done)." "The women know they are taking a big risk," she added, "but compared to the possible consequences if they don't act, they just take the chance and hope for a positive result."

Listening to the proceedings of a gathering of men and women in anguished debate about the realities of abortion in the Philippines—and its legal, physical, emotional and even spiritual implications—Marina said she was asking herself: "*Bakit sila hirap na hirap* (Why are they having such a hard time)?" To women like her and her neighbors, she said, "*walang pagninilay pa* (there's no room for doubt)."

"Religion to us is worship, but abortion has to do with our bodies, our needs, our rights," she said. Morality, or the rightness or wrongness of the act has little to do with their decision. Or else, and this is my own reflection, the "moral" questions get drowned out by more pragmatic and urgent needs. "*Sa bandang huli, naniniwala kami na mauunawaan kami ng Diyos, lipunan at aming asawa* (In the end, we hold on to the belief that we will be understood by God, society and our husbands)," Marina declared.

* * *

IS there room for a middle ground in the highly polarized debate over abortion?

If Philippine society and the government are not yet ready to confront the issue of abortion head-on by legalizing it or even by at least decriminalizing it—this despite the estimated 400,000 induced abortions in this country each year and the fairly high maternal mortality rate—then at the very least, it should obligate all health care personnel to try to save the lives of women suffering from abortion complications.

A health worker with an NGO cites the stories of many women who, bleeding from incomplete abortions, are rushed to government hospitals only to find themselves ignored by the nurses, doctors and even orderlies there. "Their attitude seems to be 'those women won't die,' even if they're bleeding all over the place." Doctors have told me, in fact, that there seems to be an unwritten protocol to "punish" women they suspect of having undergone botched abortions by making them wait as long as possible, or even by intentionally making them feel pain.

Dr. Jondi Flavier of PMAC (Prevention and Management of Abortion and its Complications) notes that it used to be part of medical protocol to ask women who come in bleeding "if they had a spontaneous or an induced abortion." The doctors with PMAC have gradually convinced emergency room personnel to drop this procedure, he said, "because not only does it violate the women's privacy, we also know that our procedures would be the same regardless of whether it was a spontaneous or induced abortion."

* * *

THE PMAC, says Dr. Flavier, is advocating for the adoption of guidelines for medical personnel on the handling of women coming in for abortion complications. Two of the more important components of these guidelines, he says, are:

- Changing the method of completing an abortion (incomplete abortion is usually the cause of heavy bleeding) from dilation and curettage (commonly known as a "D&C," which is fraught with risks) to manual vacuum aspiration, which is faster, simpler, cheaper and less invasive.
- Providing post-abortion counseling to the women, who are perceived to be "more receptive" to messages about family planning during their recovery period.

On the second point, Dr. Sylvia Estrada Claudio of Likhaan expresses reservations. "I don't think it's exactly ethical to take advantage of a woman in a weakened state to convince her to adopt a family planning method, even if she needs to," she says. "I would wait until she is stronger and in a proper frame of mind before asking her to make a decision."

And yet I can appreciate the need to talk to the women while they are still in the hospital, for oftentimes that is the only time they would ever fall within the orbit of the public health system. If we truly value women and mothers, we would do our utmost to help them, to heal them, and to save them every chance we get.

Seeing beyond our heroes

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

TOMORROW morning, a new bronze monument to Marcelo H. del Pilar will be unveiled by Samahang Plaridel in its club premises on T. M. Kalaw Street across the National Library and the National Historical Institute. I saw the studies of the statue by Jullie Lluch before it was executed and can't wait to see the finished product.

The work of Lluch comes as a welcome addition to the landmarks of Manila, unlike the other monuments—both proposed and completed—that now ruin our view and landscape. Not only are these aesthetic eyesores, they are supposed to represent Philippine history and yet are historically inaccurate. I will criticize these in a future column. Let's just hope that the government will be serious about austerity and stop the payment or commissioning of these criminally over-priced monstrosities that try to pass off as "art."

As editor of La Solidaridad, M.H. del Pilar has become a model for Filipino journalists, yet his work is not very well known because he has been overshadowed by Rizal. It is thus quite fascinating to go through the correspondence between these two great Filipinos of the late 19th century to see that all was not well in the ranks of what our history textbooks call "the Propaganda Movement."

Due to disagreements in editorial policy and political views, Rizal withdrew from La Solidaridad. Naturally, Del Pilar tried to coax him back, but in vain. At first glance, I felt Rizal was being churlish, that his withdrawal was but an attempt to elicit praise or, worse, that it was another example of insincere goodbyes: that he actually wanted to be restrained from leaving or resigning.

Reading the letters takes some practice because this has to be done with extra care each time so one can try to read between the lines. Underneath the politesse lies some very sharp edges. Writing from Paris in October 1891 Rizal told Del Pilar:

"I have just received your letter, I have read it, and I am going to answer it in order to put things in their proper places before I leave Europe. Between us two we can explain ourselves clearly because fortunately our relations date far back and our displeasures are of recent date, perhaps a product of that Madrid atmosphere. Let us explain ourselves then.

"You were the one who said that the review Solidaridad belonged to a private enterprise, which dealt with you alone. You said this when I wanted to give the Responsable the power to prevent the publication of this or that article. I told you then that I believed it was a national enterprise. Witnesses are the Filipinos present at the discussion of the by-laws. Whether it is a national or private enterprise, you fear that my active and rightful interference in [editorial] policy will outshine yours. If this is not little confidence in my political leadership, then I do not know what to attribute it to. I prefer to give this explanation rather [than] search for another, offensive to the feelings of both. You say: It's not this, its not this. I answer you: Let it be that, because it is not desirable to look for another reason, in my opinion at least.

"I am not offended that, impelled by others, you have wanted to overthrow me. It is natural for everyone to seek his glory, precisely we were in a country where everyone dissents in order to make himself head of a party or group. Before, the way you allowed yourself to be used to overthrow me hurt me; but now when I am more calm, I smile and I consider that your opposition to me has been for my own good, because, if they had elected me unanimously, I would have remained, and in what hardships I would be afterwards! My power being curtailed due to systematic opposition, with so many cares and duties incompatible with the few rights that they wished to leave me, with advisers hostile at bottom, what would have become of me? I would have conflicts and I would be completely discredited.

"Today I give thanks to Providence who has sought my welfare, and I am grateful still to those who continued voting against me until the last moment in order not to give me the unanimous vote that I was wishing! You are right in saying that time makes one see clearly many things. Today I see clear and what I considered bad, I now consider a benefit. Well, I would have had not a few conflicts with the students who had been suspended from their schools, with debts, gambling, and pawn! With my firm and impatient character I would have broken with everybody before allowing any regulation to be ignored."

This firm and impatient temperament that would be called "OC" or obsessive-compulsive today is a side of Rizal we do not see in our textbooks. This struggle for control of Solidaridad and the leadership of the expatriate Filipino community in Spain is something that is conveniently swept under the rug because our heroes should be paragons of selflessness and sacrifice.

The correspondence between Rizal and Del Pilar have to be re-read and taught to Filipinos because in these surly letters we see more than Rizal, we see ourselves in a mirror. Studying the complex personalities of our heroes is not an exercise in gossip and trivia but a way to learn from history and begin the process of change, otherwise we are forever doomed to repeat history.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Modern saints and martyrs

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

"IS that Jesus and the Virgin Mary?" I whispered to Doc Henny as we looked at two images on the main altar, one of an adult and one of a child.

Henny, ever the patient psychiatrist, explained to me the images were of Mary and her mother, Anne.

Goodness, I suddenly realized, Jesus had a *lola*. And, Henny reminded me, a *lolo* too, Joachim. We were in that amazing "feminist" Cathedral of St. Anne in Molo, Iloilo City, where nearly all the statues are of women saints. Not only could Henny identify them, she'd actually narrate a mini-biography for each of them.

I had to lower my head in shame over my ignorance of the saints, and quickly tried to find an excuse, "You really are a *colegiala* (someone who attended a Catholic girls' school)."

"Of course not," Henny protested, explaining she was properly educated in non-religious schools. I felt even greater shame because I was in Catholic schools most of my life but then, I tried to wiggle my way out, I was in boys' schools and they didn't talk too much about saints in school. (Or maybe they did and I wasn't listening, distracted by other more mundane matters—and I'm not talking about soccer.)

Hdq

Seriously, many Catholics do grow up with a rather heavy fare of stories about saints and the miracles they performed. There were *stampitas*, "holy pictures," for nearly every saint imaginable. Many Filipino homes used to have a Catholic liturgical calendar, each day properly marked with the names of saints to be remembered that day, providing possible names for newborn children.

As I mentioned earlier, I don't quite remember stories about saints in school, but at home we did have one book, a kind of dictionary of saints listing all the saints alphabetically, together with their feast day and a brief biography. There were a few martyrs listed, with descriptions of their executions. I could never forget the entries for several saints carrying a curious abbreviation, "hdq." These were mostly the Catholics of England who resisted Henry VIII and ended up being hanged, drawn and quartered. I don't want to go into a detailed description, except to say the victim, after being hanged, would be literally torn apart (into fours) by horses. Crucifixions (including an inverted one, as in the case of St. Peter, the first pope), being thrown to the lions, hdq—the path to martyrdom wasn't easy.

More than ancient history

Times do change. Filipino babies are now named after politicians and movie stars, or contractions of mom and dad's names. It's a pity we've lost so much knowledge of the saints because they were canonized as a way of setting them up as models to emulate.

Admittedly, the Catholic Church went through a kind of saints' inflation, producing thousands of saints including, it turns out, a few guys who never existed. If you still pray to St. Christopher for protection during travel, you should know he's actually a ghost saint.

We lose track, too, of the saints because they seem so much part of ancient history. The late Pope John Paul II remedied that during his papacy, beatifying and canonizing hundreds of Catholics who lived in the 19th and 20th century. The most notable example was Mother Teresa, who was beatified in 2003, barely six years after her death.

Ironically, canonization may in fact make the saints seem more distant, relegating them to another sphere, somewhere up there in heaven with the angels. In the end though, it's popular devotions that bring the saints back to earth. Along the US-Mexico border, for example, a particularly popular saint among illegal migrants is Toribio Romo, a Mexican priest who was killed in 1928 during the Cristero wars, when the government went on an anti-clerical binge.

Our modern times create more niches for patron saints. Check out a Franciscan site (www.americancatholic.org) for a list of unofficial patron saints for everything—from the Internet (St. Isidore of Sevilla, a bishop who did a 30-volume encyclopedia in the 7th century) to lapsed Catholics (St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine of Hippo, who led a life of debauchery and heresy but returned to the faith following his mother's prayers). Incidentally, St. Augustine is now the patron of brewers, presumably because he partied and drank a lot during his bad old days.

Protestant saints

Canonizations are, of course, quite political, reflecting prevailing norms. We'd never get, for example, a patron saint for gay men or for lesbians. . .although I have no doubt in my mind that some of those who did get canonized were gay.

I doubt that we would soon see the canonization of Dorothy Stang, the American Catholic nun assassinated in February. Sister Dorothy had become too vocal defending the rights of Amazonian Indians in Brazil. When her armed assassins came up to the vehicle the 72-year-old nun was riding, she responded by taking out her Bible: "This is my weapon." She was shot six times.

It's unlikely Sister Dorothy will be canonized because she lived out liberation theology, considered too radical by the late Pope John Paul II and his successor.

I do feel uneasy as well with the way the Catholic Church has expropriated the term "saint," almost as if Protestants or people of other faith couldn't be saints. I'm thinking of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose 60th death anniversary was just recently observed. He was a German pastor, theologian, ethicist. . .and a Christian martyr.

Bonhoeffer resisted the Nazis, including their attempts to impose their Aryan racist theories on the German Evangelical Church. He was vocal in opposing the Nazis and was eventually arrested for his participation in Operation Seven, which smuggled Jews into Switzerland. After his arrest, Nazi intelligence found out that he was involved as well in a plot to assassinate Hitler.

Bonhoeffer was a prolific writer, even while in jail. His writings have been put together in several anthologies and are often quoted. He is still remembered today for his description of "cheap grace" as an intellectual assent to religious doctrine without real transformation in one's life.

"Cheap grace" certainly wasn't for Bonhoeffer. He knew the cost of discipleship and paid with his life: he was executed on April 9, 1945. An SS medical doctor wrote later about how he had been impressed by the pastor's calmness at the gallows. The gentle pastor's martyrdom took place even as the Third Reich was coming to an end. On April 30, 1945, Hitler committed suicide.

While Hitler and the Nazis are long gone, Bonhoeffer continues to challenge us to think about a heroic saintliness: "We have been silent witnesses of evil deeds: we have been drenched by many storms; we have learned the arts of equivocation and pretence; experience has made us suspicious of others and kept us from being truthful and open; intolerable conflicts have worn us down and even made us cynical. Are we still of any use?"

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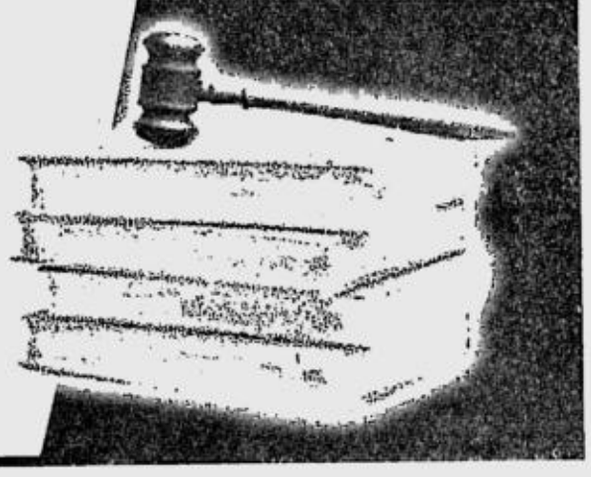

An investment for the future

LETTERS — PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THIS refers to the INQUIRER editorial, "Energy options." (PDI, 4/12/05) I agree that, alongside the adoption of energy-saving measures such as having a "four-day" work week, a concerted effort to promote and develop alternative energy sources is crucial now, more than ever.

The Philippines, indeed, abounds with renewable energy sources, such as, wind, solar, hydro, geothermal and biomass, among others. If their development and use are accelerated, these indigenous, inexhaustible "renewables" can stabilize the country's energy supply and diversify our energy resource base.

The resounding call for sustainable development also makes the renewables a preferred energy alternative worldwide. The Rio Declaration of the 1992 Earth Summit, in fact, identified renewables as environmentally benign energy sources. Similarly, the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (to which the Philippines is a signatory) encourages the promotion, development and increased use of renewable energy forms to reduce global greenhouse gases. Renewables also enjoy greater social acceptability vis-à-vis conventional fuels because they are less pollutive and do not produce health-related concerns, apart from their immense potential to energize off-grid areas.

But while renewables hold a lot of promise in terms of realizing energy self-sufficiency, foreign exchange savings and a cleaner environment for the country, current Philippine policies promoting the development and use of renewables in the country are inadequate. Existing fiscal and regulatory frameworks have been found wanting when it comes to addressing the technological, market, financial and information barriers to the accelerated development of renewables.

Several factors have been blamed for these, among them the low public awareness of the advantages of renewables, the cost distortions due to unequal tax burdens, and the failure to account for all externalities associated with energy production and use.

Fortunately, efforts to effect a truly responsive renewable energy policy are now snowballing. Several bills pertaining to the accelerated development, use and commercialization of renewables have been filed in both chambers of Congress. The proponents of these bills should work together to arrive at a unified Renewable Energy Bill and lobby hard for its immediate approval. The looming power crisis—which cannot be addressed by stop-gap measures—all the more makes its swift passage critical.

Given the many quantifiable and unquantifiable benefits that they bring, the renewables will soon emerge as the most important energy source. Thus, a Renewable Energy Bill should be viewed as an "investment for the future." Upholding it is a step in the right direction if we are to tread the path of energy self-reliance and sustainability.

—JUN PROSINI S. ANAVE,
5 Kawilihan St.,
Maybunga, Pasig City

A clarion call for better administration of justice

THE DEATH of Ted Borlongan, former president of Urban Bank, bears heavily upon me as a lawyer and, more so, upon the whole judicial system. His alleged suicide e-mail note, sent close to the day of his death, spilled out his suicidal disgust over the perceived injustice he suffered from the lowest to the highest echelon of the judiciary.

The deadly sense of inequity perceived, rightly or wrongly, by the late Borlongan is an indictment of how the honorable Supreme Court deports itself before the litigants and the public.

The dead man's deafening, self-imposed silence now serves as a thundering call for those involved in the administration of justice. It is a clarion call for lawyers who are considered officers of the court to be vigilant not only in upholding the honor and dignity of the profession but also in improving the manner justice is served.

Moreover, his muted cries scream, to one and all, the urgent need for judges to adhere to the Canon of Judicial Ethics, which prescribes that their conduct shall not only be above reproach but also beyond suspicions of impropriety.

In other words, everything about the Court and its lieutenants must inspire only faith and respect, not skepticism and mistrust.

—MA. GRACIA DE V. RIÑOZA-PLAZO,
62 Katipunan Ave. Ext.,
Loyola Grand Villas, QC

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Gov't should care for ordinary people

I WAS happy, sad and angry—yes, all at the same time—when I read the news about the police being able to immediately capture the man who held up a Belgian delegate to the Inter-Parliamentary Union assembly recently held in Manila.

Happy because the robber was caught and, on top of that, immediate action was also taken against a foreign exchange dealer that shortchanged another IPU delegate. Sad and angry because the police don't provide the same "swift" service for ordinary Filipinos.

I wonder why our police perform better for foreigners. Is it because they care less for Filipinos? Or is it because they are more concerned with what foreigners, rather than with what Filipinos, would think of them?

I have never heard of the police act as fast in cases involving ordinary Filipinos. If they can be very fast in solving crimes against foreigners, then surely they must be capable of doing the same for Filipinos.

I am aware that ordinary Filipinos have fallen prey to robbers and many of them were even killed by assailants. However, most of these cases are left unsolved. And yet, the usual places where they are committed are well-known to policemen. If the police would like to get rid of these robbers, all they have to do is to go to these places in civilian attire, wearing jewelry. Then policemen wouldn't have to run after these robbers. The robbers will practically go after the policemen, the easier to arrest criminals. But it seems that the police don't care because the victims are just ordinary Filipinos.

If we really want a peaceful and progressive republic, we should start caring for ordinary Filipinos.

When I became aware of the presence of rebellious groups in this country, I thought at first it was because of the way Marcos governed our country. But after four presidents, there are still the New People's Army, Moro Islamic Liberation Front and other rebel groups. Perhaps, one of the reasons they are against the government is that they are not getting the justice from our government. Isn't it that justice must be for all and not just for a few selected, rich, influential people?

—STELLA E. LOPEZ,
selopez@pldt.com.ph

Their money, not their lives

IT'S been months since Robert Tarongoy, an overseas Filipino worker hired by the Saudi Arabian Trading Company, was abducted in Iraq. Last month, the Philippines was shocked to see the video aired by the Arab station Al-Jazeera, showing Tarongoy with his abductors behind. The kidnappers demanded that our government withdraw all its support for the US war against Iraq or he will be beheaded.

How is Tarongoy? Until now the Department of Foreign Affairs is trying to get over the issue by hiding it from the media and the public—the silence continues. The Arroyo government is neglecting its responsibility to hastily save the life of Tarongoy. Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas are skirting the problem. Instead of taking the necessary steps to save Tarongoy's life, they are blaming him for illegally entering Iraq. This only shows that the DFA and DOLE are trying to wash their hands.

The Arroyo government must remember that there is another economic hero to be saved. Tarongoy's case must not be hidden from the public.

We should also be aware that not only Tarongoy is longing to come back to the Philippines. There are thousands of them abroad. If President Macapagal-Arroyo, Romulo and Sto. Tomas don't care to protect their rights and welfare, then we are right in saying that it is their remittances that the government is protecting, not their lives.

—LITO MABAQUIAO,
spokesperson,
Migrante Manila,
migrante.manila@gmail.com

Marikina's invisible 'no parking' signs

IN THE PAST few months, I have witnessed several vehicles being towed from the street just across the Marikina City Hall. The reason motorists park their vehicles there is they are not aware that parking is strictly prohibited in that area—the "no parking" sign, aside from being too small, is perched high on top of a lamppost, making it out of the normal visual range of vehicle owners.

In this connection, I would like to request Marikina Mayor Marides C. Fernando to make the "no parking" signs bigger and place them at reasonable eye-level. Then the Markina City authorities will have all the right to tow the vehicles of erring motorists.

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court,
Malanday, Marikina City

INQBOX

Question of the Week

Three top beneficiaries code-named M1, M2 and JS7, relatives of a top government official, allegedly rake in millions of monthly jueteng money. Your reaction?

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Special kids get hope in Pangasinan

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Urdaneta City

WHEN classes open in June, 14-year-old Dionisio Calimlim will go to pre-school. He should have been in high school, but cerebral palsy made his hands tremble. He cannot even hold a pencil.

Calimlim was born to a jobless father and a mother who earns money for the family by selling *palamig* (sweetened drinks) in a public school. Physical therapy for the boy was out of the question—the family simply could not afford it.

Hope came when the Breaking Barriers for Children (BBC) opened the Stimulation and Therapeutic Activity Center (Stac) in Urdaneta City in April last year. The BBC is a joint project of the Katipunan ng Maykapansanan sa Pilipinas (Kampi) and the Danish National Society of Polio and Accident Victims. It is funded by the Danish International Development Agency.

The provincial government of Pangasinan provided the space for the Stac while the city government of Urdaneta provided the equipment and pays for utilities.

Calimlim underwent almost a year of physical and occupational therapy at the center and can now control his hands.

Illuminada Surop, special education (Sped) coordinator of the center, said Calimlim can already write and by June will be integrated in a public pre-school in the city.

Calimlim is one of about 100 Pangasinan children, aged 4 to 14, with disabilities who have undergone rehabilitation and who will be enrolled in either regular schools or special education classes in June.

Only in its first year of operation in Pangasinan, BBC is helping some 1,500 children with disabilities, said Marydell Legaspi, area coordinator of BBC-Pangasinan.

The BBC has established six main centers (in the cities of Urdaneta, Dagupan, Alaminos and San Carlos and in the towns of Lingayen and Rosales) and 26 satellite centers in the province.

Legaspi attributed the project's success in Pangasinan to the strong support of Gov. Victor Agbayani, who assigned a room at the Eastern Pangasinan Community Hospital in Urdaneta and the Western Pangasinan Community Hospital in Alaminos as centers. In other towns and cities, the local governments provided the room and equipment.

"It is because of the strong support of the officials and also of other non-government organizations and civic organizations, which help children who need surgery or other medical attention, that the BBC is very successful in Pangasinan," she said.

Agbayani said the provincial government is supporting women and children-related issues, which is why they helped the BBC in establishing the centers.

The centers are child-friendly and designed like playrooms to give the children comfort while undergoing therapy. These are manned by two physical therapists, an occupational therapist, a Sped coordinator and two social workers.

The therapy, exercises and lessons seem like games to the children, center workers said.

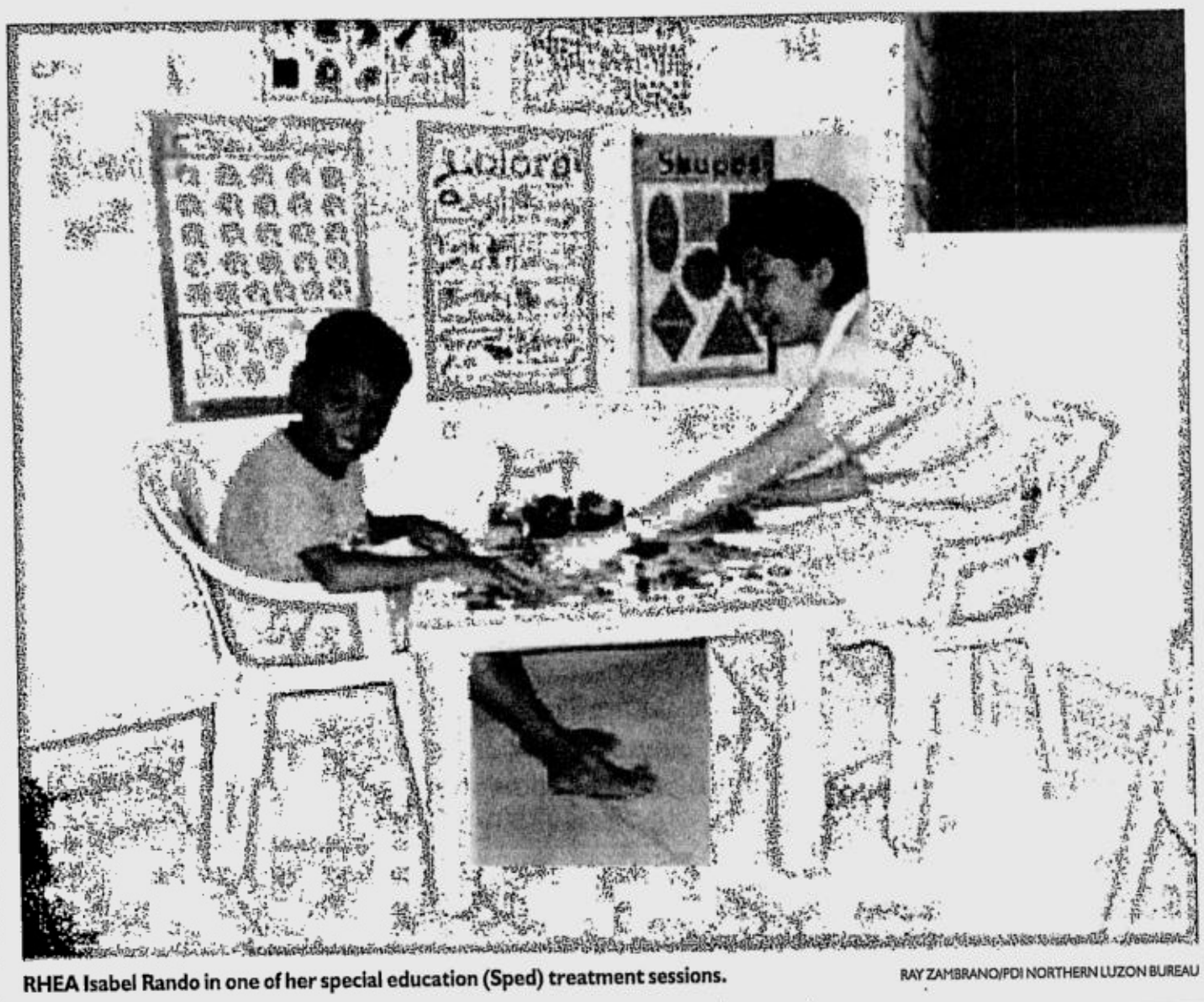
"For instance, we ask a child to hand a ball to someone to exercise his arm muscles," said physical therapist Wilma Estandian of the Binmaley center.

The children have been confined to their homes because, while the parents are willing to have them rehabilitated, they have no money for therapy and medication or are not aware that there is hope for rehabilitation.

These children belong to poor families that they are seemingly doomed to helplessness, and have no hope to be productive members of their communities.

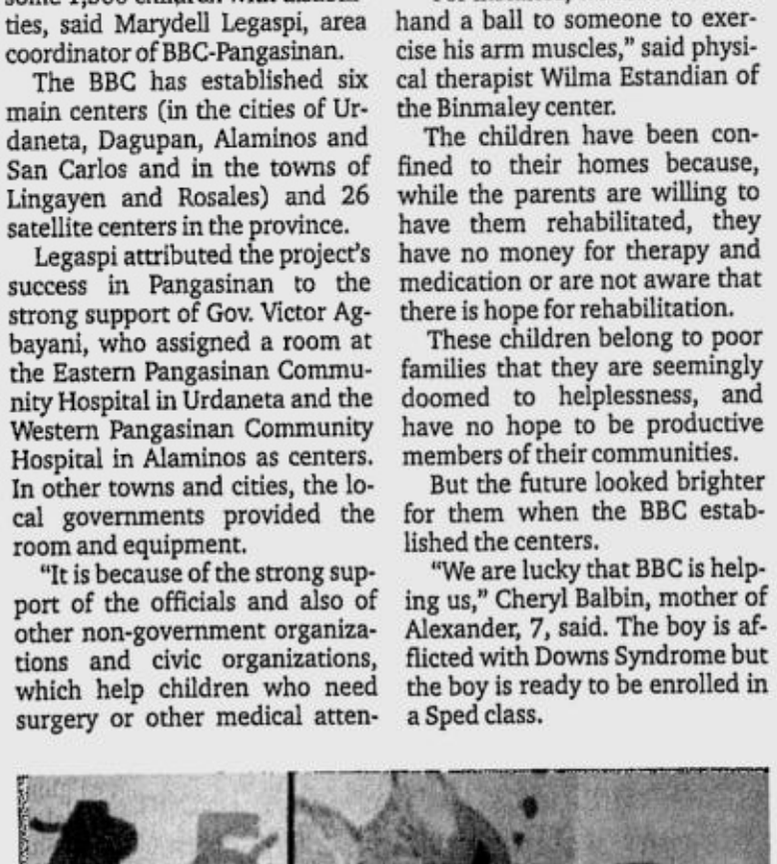
But the future looked brighter for them when the BBC established the centers.

"We are lucky that BBC is helping us," Cheryl Balbin, mother of Alexander, 7, said. The boy is afflicted with Downs Syndrome but the boy is ready to be enrolled in a Sped class.



RHEA Isabel Rando in one of her special education (Sped) treatment sessions.

RAY ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU



JOHNINE Recil Pagador, 5, gets help from Rando.

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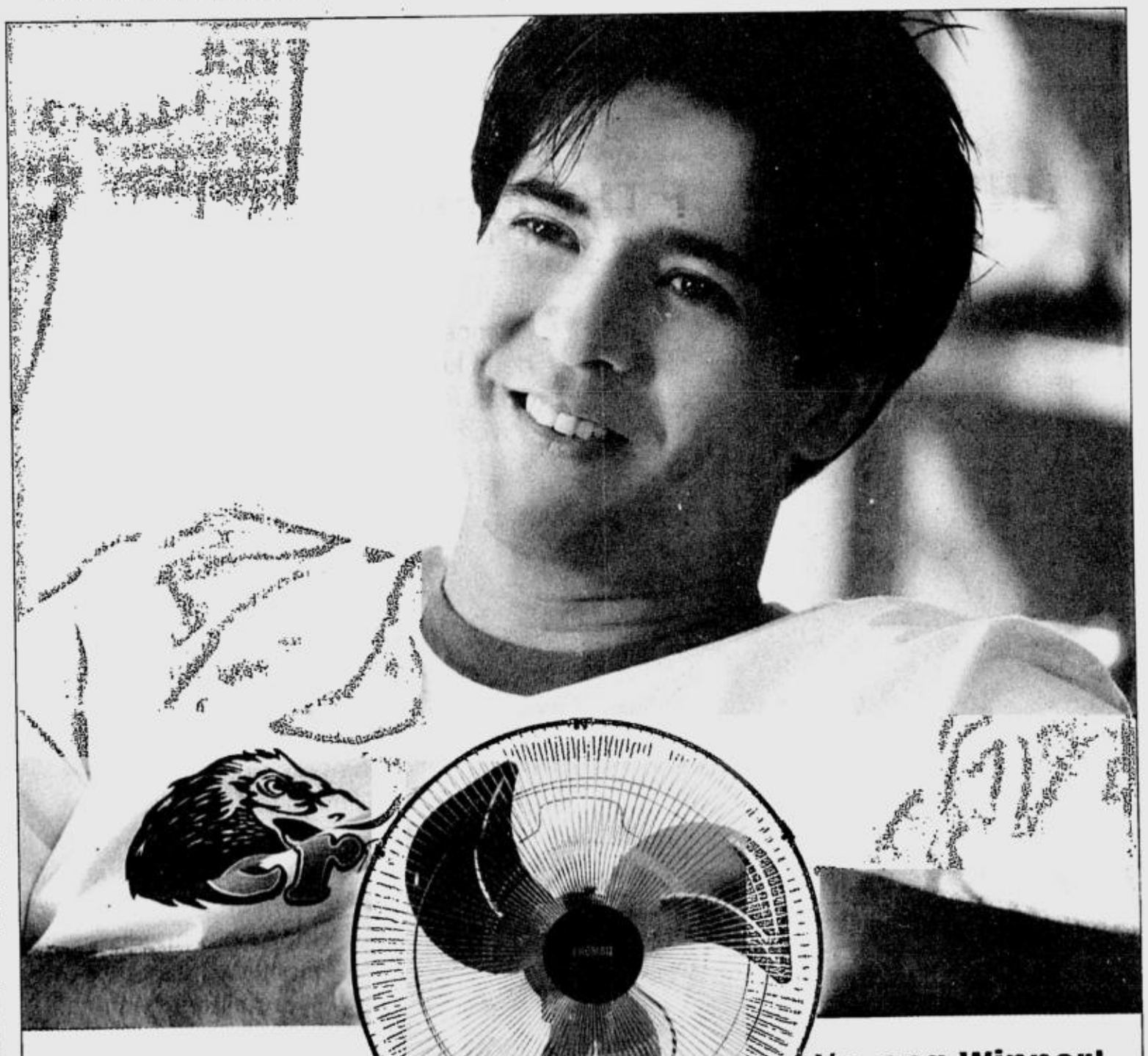

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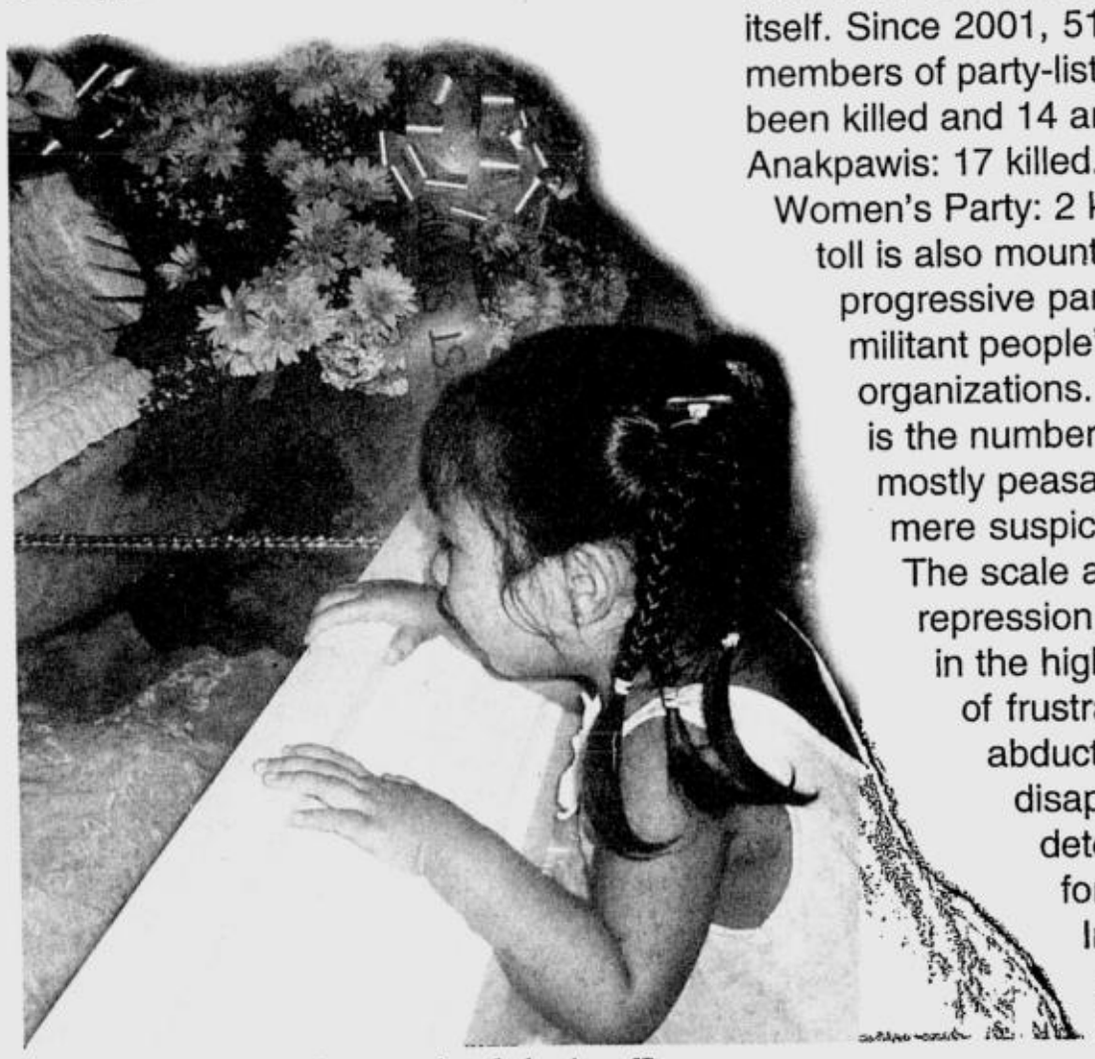
A Statement of Concern on the Killings of Political Activists

IN JUST A SPAN OF 15 WEEKS SINCE JANUARY, 31 people, mostly identified with activist political parties and organizations, have been systematically gunned down in a series of incidents across the country. In Central Luzon alone, the center of the Hacienda Luisita dispute, 13 have been summarily executed and 5 are still missing.

What wrong have these persons committed that they should be silenced by a hail of bullets?

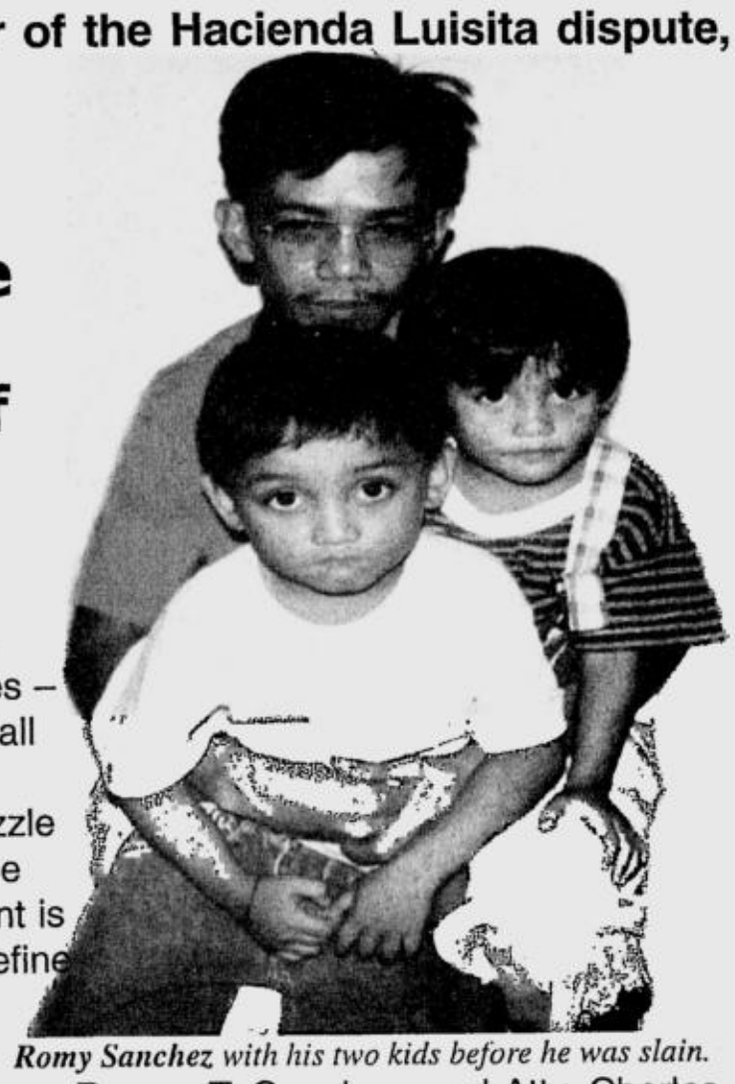
THE VICTIMS – of such diverse backgrounds as Tarlac City Councilor and Bayan Muna Leader Abelardo Ladera (+ March 3), radio broadcaster and Bayan Ilocos Secretary General Romy Sanchez (+ March 9), IFI priest and PCPR member William Tadena (+ March 13), human rights lawyer and Bayan Muna coordinator Felidito Dacut (+ March 14) and Anakpawis and KMP peasant leader Ben Concepcion (+ March 17) – had one thing in common other than their commitment to serving the people and fighting for national sovereignty, genuine democracy and social justice. They were affiliated with legal organizations that have become the object of vilification by those who invoke the mantra of "national security" to suppress the voices of dissent.



2 year-old Jan-jan Dacut at her father's coffin.

How many more lives should be stolen before we heed the cries of the widows and orphans?

TODAY, WE SPEAK OUT for all those who can no longer speak for themselves – and for ourselves too, because we are all at risk. We remember the lessons of martial law that whatever is done to muzzle the voice of one is an act done to all; the use of the gun to silence political dissent is an attack on the basic freedoms that define a democracy.



Romy Sanchez with his two kids before he was slain.

Is there an undeclared war on activists that has rendered them open targets of attack?

LET THE STATISTICS SPEAK for itself. Since 2001, 51 leaders and members of party-list Bayan Muna have been killed and 14 are still missing. Anakpawis: 17 killed. Gabriela Women's Party: 2 killed. The death toll is also mounting on other progressive party-lists as well as militant people's and human rights organizations. Just as alarming is the number of other civilians, mostly peasant folk, slain on mere suspicion of leftist links. The scale and enormity of repression are further evident in the high number of cases of frustrated murder, abduction and disappearance, illegal detention and various forms of harassment. Included here are prominent human rights lawyers – UN *ad litem* Judge Romeo T. Capulong and Atty. Charles Juloya of Ilocos – who survived assassination attempts while helping their clients seek justice.

Does government silence and inaction indicate that it officially sanctions the scale of repression?

MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICIALS and their entire units are implicated in the concentrated campaign against unarmed political activists and their supporters. Not one has been brought to justice; the most notorious have even been promoted. Official military documents tagging militant organizations as a 'national security problem' further bolster suspicions that there is an official policy of sanction for the use of summary execution and other human rights violations on political activists. At any rate, the escalating crackdown on activists is but part of a larger pattern of impunity – in a country where extrajudicial killings have become the norm, victimizing even journalists and entire Muslim communities.

We ask all concerned Filipinos to join us as we thus demand:

Stop the killings and harassment. Relieve all military, police and other state agents implicated in the murder and enforced disappearance of activists.

Bring the perpetrators to justice.

Scrap all policies and measures that curtail civil liberties and human rights.

To be silent in the face of brazen acts of violence will only multiply the injustices already committed.

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Gaano kadali ang pagpaslang?
Sansaglit, at may nakitil nang buhay.
May punglo na humahagibis
At may pag-asa na napapatid.

Gaano katagal
Ang ating paglalamay?
Hintayin bang ang luha ay maglawa
At ang telang itim na yumayakap
Sa bawat bangkay ay maging dagat?

Luhang alat, dagat alat.
Paanong malulunok itong dahas?

Sipi mula sa tulang PAGTINDIG ni Prof. Joi Barrios

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Please join us in a candle light service on Thursday, May 12, 2005, 4-6:00 pm at the Hardin ng mga Diwata, UP Diliman Faculty Center near Vargas Museum.

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N. Vizcaya gambling lords feel heat

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Jueteng operations suddenly stopped in this province on Tuesday, in a sign of things to come for illegal gambling operators nationwide, a top provincial government official told the INQUIRER.

The official said jueteng financiers all over Luzon were supposedly ordered by "people at the top *(nasa itaas)*" on Monday night to stop their operations.

"*Masyadong uminit yung isyu* (The controversy became too hot to handle)," the official said.

Quoting a jueteng insider in the province, the provincial official said the stop was apparently triggered by calls for an investigation from Congress over allegations that government and police officials were the biggest protectors of jueteng.

The INQUIRER reported that the three relatives, with code names M1, M2 and JS7, were getting a total of P2 million a month from police officers in a region in Luzon. The amount was on top of what the three receive from jueteng operators.

Police officials in the province, however, clarified that jueteng operations here stopped because of their anti-illegal gambling campaign.

"I have ordered all chiefs of police that there should be no let-up [in the crackdown against illegal gambling operations]," said Senior Supt. Ruben Catabona, acting Nueva Vizcaya police director.

He said the police have always maintained a continuous campaign against illegal gambling, citing their recent arrests of jueteng bet collectors.

"We have presented these accomplishments to (Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena) and I personally assured him that we were doing our best to stop jueteng in the province," Catabona said.

Villena earlier assailed President Macapagal-Arroyo for her administration's failure to stamp out illegal gambling in the province.

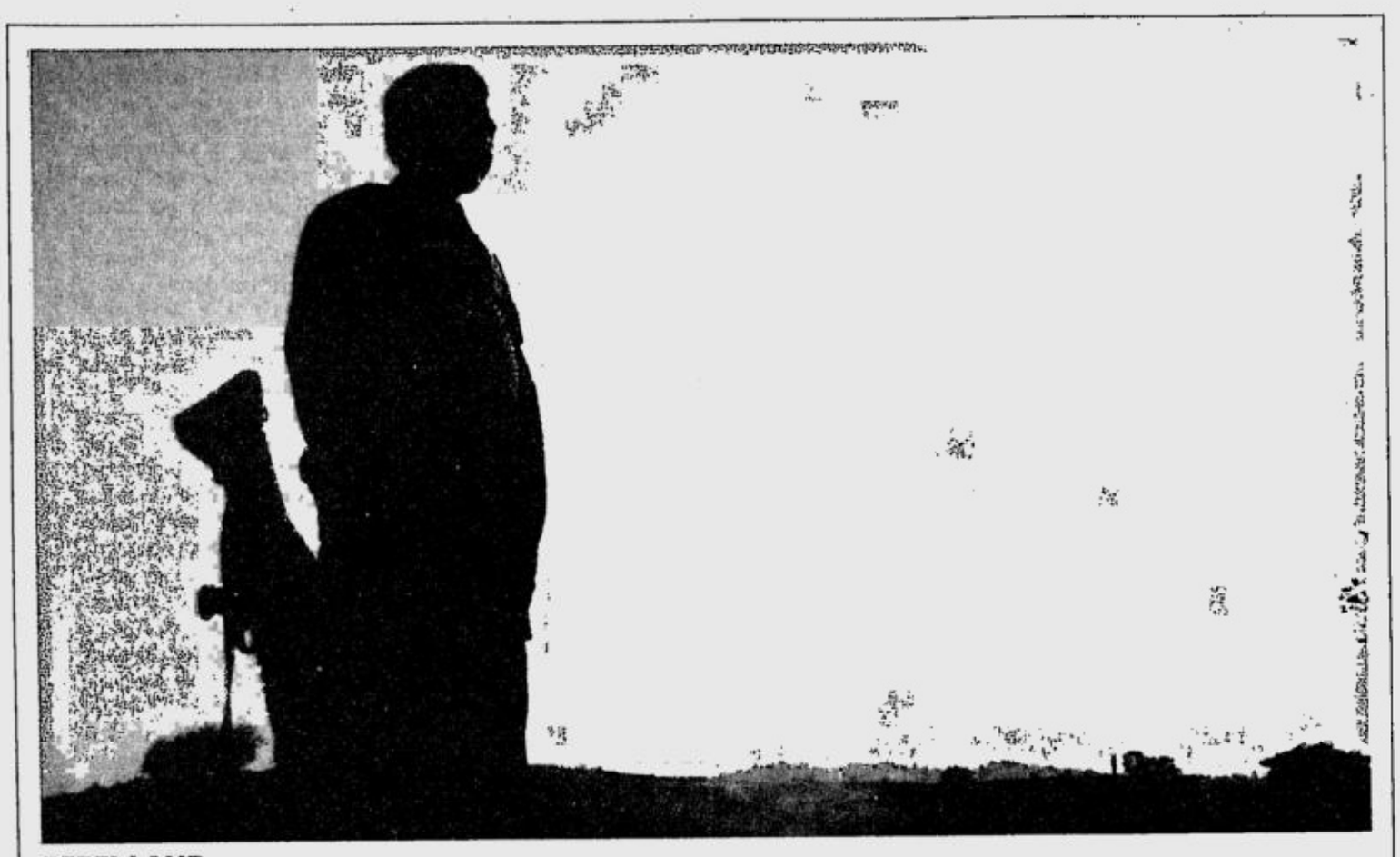
"The scourge of jueteng can be eradicated if the President, as chief executive of the republic, declares war on jueteng," Villena said in a statement.

In Isabela, Bishop Sergio Utleg said he would meet all priests in Isabela's 35 towns and two cities to strengthen their fight against jueteng through the pulpit.

Utleg, in an earlier statement, urged national and local leaders to deliver on their promise to stop the illegal numbers game.

"To the political leaders, mayors, police and prosecutors, if we have tolerated and abetted jueteng for so long and because of it, Christ still does not fully reign among us. Let us imitate the repentant thief: Acknowledge our faults and repent so that we can enter Christ's Kingdom," he said.

Melvin Gascon with a report from Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



REBEL LAND
A member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front stands guard at a camp set up by the separatist guerrillas in the jungles of Barangay Kinebaka in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. The guerrillas have rejected participation in the Aug. 8 elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.
JEOFFREY MAITEM/PDI MINDANAO

Antiqueños celebrate Binirayan festival

ILOILO CITY—Antiqueños will mark today the highlight of this year's Binirayan Festival with the reenactment of the landing of 10 Bornean datus in Malandog Beach in Hamtic town, Antique.

Thousands of visitors are expected to flock to the province to witness the various events of the festival, which began on April 18 and will end on April 29.

Binirayan (literally means where those who have sailed landed) is one of Panay Island's festivals, depicting the landing and settlement of Bornean *datus* (chieftains) on the island during the 13th century as claimed in the Maragtas legends.

According to accounts, 10 *datus* led by Datu Puti and Datu Sumakwel, along with their families and supporters, fled Borneo to escape death from the hands of the cruel ruler Datu Makatunaw.

Traveling on barangays (swift-sailing boats), they first landed in the Siwaragan River in San Joaquin town, Iloilo. But after finding the rocky area unsuitable for settlement and agriculture, the party sailed further northwest until they reached the shores of Malandog.

The 31-year-old festival was first held in 1974 under the leadership of slain former Gov. Evelio Javier.

The festival has evolved throughout the years. Indigenous music and dances were introduced in 1978.

The festival culminates in merry-making in the streets of San Jose during the day. As night falls, a cultural presentation unveils featuring dances, songs and practices of Antiqueños such as *harana* (serenading), *pamalaye* (betrothal), *sinulog* (courtship) and offerings to the newly weds that thrive before the coming of Europeans.

On Thursday, the Lin-ay Kang Antique (Muse of Antique) will be held while Antiqueño achievers will be honored in the Bugal Kang Antique on the last day of the festival. *Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Dealers warned of crackdown on 'gray' cell phones

DAVAO CITY—The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) here warned cell phone dealers and retailers that the government was set to launch a crackdown against the rampant sale of defective cell phone units in the region.

Josue Go, NTC regional director for Southern Mindanao, told reporters they have monitored at least 400 cell phone dealers and retailers in the region, who continue to sell so-called gray cell phones.

Gray cell phones are units with minor factory defects sold at very low prices in the market.

Go said violators will have to pay a penalty of P5,000 per defective unit found in their stores on top of a prison sentence once the government starts its crackdown in the coming months.

"Most cell phone dealers and retailers are selling these units, which are not covered by the warranty term in the regular cell phone sale," Go said.

He said such a practice was illegal.

Go said they have been receiving 10 to 20 complaints every day about defective, lost and stolen cell phones. *Germelina A. Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Number of rabies cases rises

ROXAS CITY—Three persons died of rabies while 20 other suffered illnesses when they were bitten by stray dogs in the province from January to April this year, records at the Provincial Veterinarian's Office showed. Capiz provincial veterinarian Leonel Abordo said the fatalities were all from Pilar town in Capiz and died last month. Provincial health officer Obdulia Gloria noted an increase in the number of persons bitten by stray dogs compared to last year when only 13 cases were recorded. She lamented that the figure went up despite the intensified campaign and implementation of an ordinance against stray dogs. But Gloria said keeping the dogs off the streets should not only be the responsibility of government but also of every dog owner. *Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

City hall drug users warned

DUMAGUETE CITY—Three casual employees here have been told to undergo voluntary rehabilitation, lest they lose their jobs after they were found positive of illegal drug use. "After the rehabilitation, if the result would show that they were already rehabilitated, they could go back to their jobs," said Mayor Agustin Perdices. He said the three were assigned at the city's slaughterhouse and were part of the first batch of City Hall workers who were subjected to random drug tests last month. *Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Hundred Islands Festival

TOURISTS were invited to visit the Hundred Islands to take part in the celebration of its feast that started last April 20 and would last until May 1. Events like a cycling competition, called Tour de Hundred Islands, a Hundred Islands Amazing Race and a youth environment camp, have been lined up during the festival dates. The events, and 20 other major and minor activities during and before the festivity, will be sponsored by the Department of Tourism and Smart Communications. Over 50,000 spectators, revelers and participants from Luzon are expected to come. The cycling competition will originate in Alaminos City, and pass through three regions, seven provinces and 47 municipalities. Its finish line is the Lucap Wharf facing the Hundred Islands on May 1. In a statement, Alaminos Mayor Hernani Braganza, who now manages the islands, said 12 teams, including members of the national squad to the Southeast Asian Games, will compete on April 29. Camping and other outdoor activities are also lined up.

Boy killed in road crash

MALILIPOT, Albay—A 13-year-old boy was killed while 14 others were seriously wounded when a jeep bound for Tabaco City fell into a river after one of its front wheels burst on Sunday morning. Senior Insp. Melchor Borber, town chief of police, identified the fatality as Jose Ripaz Jr., a scavenger who was collecting empty bottles near the Nawang Bridge in Barangay Sta. Teresa, when bumped by the vehicle. The victims were rushed to various hospitals in Legazpi and Tabaco cities. Driver Roderick Acuna, 28, surrendered to police. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Media on 'common tao'

LUCENA CITY—Quezon Rep. Proceso Alcala has urged Quezon media professionals to also write stories on the lives of ordinary persons in the province. Alcala, one of the guests during the induction ceremony of the Camp Nakar Press Corps on Thursday, said successful stories of the common tao could serve as an inspiration for others to also succeed in life. He stressed the important role of media in disseminating positive and inspiring information. Alcala said ordinary folk have their own stories to share and could move others to work hard for the realization of their dreams. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Palace: All 'jueteng' rumors

From page A1

Lacson earlier said he knew who M1, M2 and JS7 were. But he said it was not JS7 but JS6.

"(The source made a) mistake. He thinks the place, the province is under Region 7 but it is under Region 6," Lacson said.

But he declined to comment on the speculation that M1 referred to the First Gentleman and M2 to his son Mikey.

"Let's wait for the appropriate time, the hearing. We will find out soon enough," Lacson said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday filed a resolution directing the Senate committee on games and amusement chaired by Sen. Lito Lapid to "conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported involvement of three relatives of a top government official in jueteng operations and the continuing proliferation of this illegal numbers game in the country."

The inquiry was directed at amending Republic Act No. 9287, which increased the penalties for the illegal numbers game.

Protection for whistle-blower

Lacson and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the "whistle-blower" could be given protection to encourage him to testify.

The Senate hearing on the request to raise the subsistence allowance of military and police personnel yesterday turned into a query on the jueteng controversy as Lacson and Biazon quizzed Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao on the matter.

"Do you know who leaked this information?" Biazon asked Lomibao. "For all you know, the one who leaked the information might have a hidden agenda." Lomibao did not answer.

Even before any member of the First Family could be directly implicated in the latest jueteng payoff scandal, administration allies in the House of Representatives were already defending the First Gentleman.

Demolition attack

Speaking on behalf of the ruling bloc in the House, Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said there seemed to be a "pattern of demolition attack" on the First Gentleman in an "apparent bid to destroy the presidency."

"They are hitting the First Gentleman because they cannot find any fault in President Macapagal-Arroyo. I can sense a pattern of a concerted demolition attack against Mike aimed at weakening the presidency," said Nograles.

ALL IN A DAY'S work for this *cobrador* (collector) who's doing his accounting before turning over the collected bets to a *kabo* who turns them over to a *rebisador* for the next draw. PDI PHOTO FILE

Nograles said that instead of trying to find evidence to link the First Family to jueteng, the PNP chief should be made accountable.

"Lomibao should come out with a detailed report on the PNP's anti-illegal gambling campaign because if it is true 'jueteng operations' continue to exist in many parts of the country, there's no one to blame but the PNP leadership," the majority leader said.

No-take policy

Short of admitting that some policemen were on the take, Lomibao told regional commanders in Luzon to strictly enforce the "no-take policy" in their renewed campaign against jueteng.

At a meeting on Monday night, Lomibao told regional directors he would sack any commander who fails to stop jueteng in his territory.

"I talked to them last night, and I told them to do everything, to conduct aggressive operations and (to) eradicate it as soon as possible," he said.

He did not set a deadline.

"The regional directors, likewise, have committed to see to it that the no-take policy will be strictly observed at all levels of command," Lomibao said in a statement.

He said jueteng could be stopped "if everybody will cooperate."

Since Spanish times

He added: "It has been in existence since the Spanish times. But I'm confident that with this law that has been passed, then we might be able to drastically reduce or even eradicate it."

Lomibao was referring to stiffer penalties for convicted jueteng operators, financiers, bettors and coddlers as provided for by Republic Act No. 9287.

In San Juan, Metro Manila, Mayor JV Ejercito rebuked Nograles and Rep. Joel Almario for denying that jueteng had become more prevalent under the Arroyo administration.

Ejercito said acknowledging the existence of jueteng and not sweeping it under the rug was one of the steps needed to stop it.

He said media reports on the proliferation of jueteng in many parts of the country should not be brushed aside by those in government as mere allegations intended to destabilize the government.

With a report from Luige A. del Puerto

Some mediamen on 'jueteng' payroll, too, says PNP exec

By Luige A. del Puerto

EVEN members of the media receive a cut from jueteng operations, according to a ranking Philippine National Police official who has decided to expose the extent of the illegal numbers game in the country.

They include a popular broadsheet columnist and a radio station, which used to be very vocal about the illegal numbers game.

The PNP official said the total jueteng payola to the media in Luzon and Metro Manila amounted to P375,000 every 15 days—not much compared with what politicians and police officers receive but enough to augment a media person's meager income.

This amount is on top of what the broadsheet columnist and the Manila-based radio station get.

"The columnist receives P75,000 every 15 days. You know him," the police official said. "The radio station receives P50,000. That's why you don't hear much about jueteng from this station nowadays."

How spoils are divided

Citing an alleged PNP list of people and groups on the take, the police official explained how the spoils from the illegal numbers game is divided.

Sixty-seven percent goes to the "capitalist" or "financier." The financier takes care of paying the winnings of a bettor.

Thirty-three percent goes to the operator.

Of the 33 percent, one-third goes to the "locals," or the local chief executives and the local police chief, and one-third to "nationals," or the national politicians and national police officers.

The last third goes to the operator, but with a cut of around 2 percent for M1, M2 and JS7, the code names of relatives of a top government official now cornering huge payoffs from the illegal numbers game.

Soldiers defeat Moro rebels—in basketball

By Ferdinand O. Zuasola
PDI Mindanao Bureau

TARRAGONA, Davao Oriental—Soldiers and Moro rebels clashed and fought each other hard here last week but, happily, no blood was spilled.

This was because the battleground was the basketball court at the municipal gymnasium here and, in the end, the soldiers won by a huge margin.

Benjie Bulaong, Sangguniang Kabataan municipal federation president, on Friday said he could no longer remember the actual score but for the organizers, it was not important.

"What mattered most to us was that they heeded our call for peace at least even for a short while," Bulaong, a peace activist, said.

He said organizers of the match thought that it might not push through because the Army and the rebels might not agree to it.

Peaceful to the end

Bulaong said Christian peace workers talked to representatives of the Army's 67th Infantry Battalion about the game while Muslim peace advocates did the same with the local MILF leadership.

"We never expected they would agree. We thought our plan was impossible to achieve," he said.

So when the game was finally held last Friday, the crowd was ecstatic when they learned the teams would be from the Army and the MILF.

"The basketball game started so peacefully and it ended peacefully, too. It was amazing and heartwarming to see MILF rebels and government soldiers playing basketball," Bulaong said.

The basketball match between the soldiers and the rebels was part of the efforts of peace advocates here to make the town a peaceful place to live.

In 2000, Tarragona was site of one of the bloodiest clashes between government forces and the MILF.

"We are already tired of war," Bulaong said.

He said many Muslim youths here were "very supportive" of the "peace efforts."

Peace concert

Aside from the basketball match, peace advocates also sponsored a "peace concert" here on Friday evening.

"Soldiers and MILF rebels attended the peace concert. As with the civilians, they also enjoyed it," Bulaong said.

"This is just the start of our long journey toward achieving unity between Muslim and Christian residents here," he added.

"This sends a very clear and strong message to the government and the MILF that the people of Tarragona are tired of the war," Syongi Anislag, spokesperson of Tarragona Mayor Sammy Uy, said.

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Guingona confirmed on time for China leader's 3-day visit

From page A1

nese Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Hu is set to meet today with President Macapagal-Arroyo and address a joint session of Congress. The leaders will also witness the signing of business agreements worth some P54.3 billion, Malacañang said.

Hu's three-day state visit reciprocates that made by President Macapagal-Arroyo to Beijing in September last year.

"We share a strong and enduring friendship with China and President Hu's state visit is an affirmation of our demanding economic ties," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in an earlier statement.

Bunye said the framework of cooperation between the two countries was based on the "shared prosperity" of Filipino and Chinese citizens "at a time of regional consolidation in trade and investment."

"The economic complementarity of China and the Philippines is a given, and we will reinforce this with a strong diplomatic push to grow investments and jobs for Filipinos," he said.

The two leaders will also witness the signing of a P16.3-billion loan facility between the Department of Finance and the Chinese government for the construction of a railway that will link Manila with northern provinces and create at least 17,000 jobs, Bunye said.

ARRIVAL honors are accorded Chinese President Hu Jintao on arrival on Tuesday night at the Naia I for a three-day state visit. Incoming Philippine Ambassador to China Teofisto Guingona leads the VIP reception. Also in photo is Willy Gaa (left), the country's outgoing envoy to China. ROGER MARGALLO

Walk in the park

The former vice president said it would take him two to three weeks to assume his post in Beijing, after the presentation of his credentials to the Chinese government and its acceptance.

Guingona, 76, laughed at the criticism about his fitness for the position on account of his age, saying he could still hack it.

"I play tennis every day. I think I am young for my age, *pwede pa* (I can still do it)," he told reporters.

Guingona said his priority would be to boost trade with China.

On the Spratlys issue, he said he would have to review the present agreements. He reiterated the country's One-China Policy and expressed no interest in looking into the killing of a father and daughter visiting Tiananmen Square, saying it was a police matter.

Still a violation?

But former Sen. Francisco Tatad, who opposed Guingona's confirmation on grounds that he had exceeded the age limit for officials and employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs, said he was now considering raising the issue in court.

In a phone interview from Washington D.C., the opposition leader said he would consult his lawyers on his next move upon his return this weekend.

"I still believe that it's still a violation of the law," said Tatad who, in a letter to the commission last March, argued that the 76-year-old Guingona was past the "compulsory" retirement age of 65 as prescribed by Section 23 of the Foreign Service Act of 1991.

"The career system will continue to be hurt. The demoralization will continue," Tatad said, when asked what he thought of the confirmation's impact on DFA personnel.

"While the prerogative to appoint ambassadors belongs to the President, the career system contemplates more career appointees rather than political appointees," he said.

Ambassadors not included

In Guingona's case, "it's actually no longer a question of whether it's a career or political appointment. The question is: Is the law still being followed?" Tatad added.

The former vice president had earlier countered Tatad's arguments by maintaining that the retirement provision invoked by the ex-senator does not cover the appointment of ambassadors.

"The Constitution does not specify any qualification for ambassadors and, therefore, the President, under the Constitution has the power to appoint the ambassador of her choice," Guingona said in a statement on Monday.

"The Constitution prevails over [the provision cited by Tatad], which is on compulsory retirement. Said section of that law does not cover appointments," he added.

DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said the department welcomed Guingona's entry into the roster of envoys, noting: "The CA has confirmed his appointment and it's now time to work." *With reports from Nikko Dizon, AP and AFP*

FILIPINO members of Falun Gong hold a peaceful protest across from the Manila Hotel to denounce the alleged persecution and torture of its members in China on time for the visit here of Chinese President Hu Jintao. AP

Falun Gong members protest Hu Jintao visit

A SMALL group of Falun Gong members tussled with police yesterday hours before the scheduled arrival of President Hu Jintao of China, which has outlawed the spiritual group.

At least four Filipino Falun Gong members arrived in mid-afternoon outside the Manila Hotel, where Hu is to stay, armed with bullhorns and Chinese-language banners denouncing Beijing's ongoing crackdown on the movement.

Riot police promptly moved in to confiscate some of their banners, but later allowed them to stage a peaceful protest across the street from the hotel.

"We want him (Hu) to stop the torture and repression of Falun Gong members in China," Bing Felipe told AFP on the scene.

Hu was scheduled to begin a three-day visit to the Philippines yesterday, a day after the sixth anniversary of an April 25, 1999, Falun Gong protest involving some 10,000 members of the spiritual group who encircled the Communist Party's leadership compound of Zhongnanhai in Beijing.

Three months later, the Chinese government declared the group an "evil cult." It has worked to eradicate the Falun Gong in China, arresting thousands and jailing them or placing them in labor camps, according to its overseas branches.

The group formerly practised Buddhist and Taoist traditional breathing and meditation exercises in parks and streets throughout China and followed the spiritual teachings of exiled guru Li Hongzhi.

London-based rights monitor Amnesty International on Saturday said Chinese police are renewing a crackdown on Falun Gong, citing the arrest in Beijing of 56-year-old Liu Yawen on March 31 after she was seen distributing Falun Gong literature in Beijing. *AFP*

Neighbors 'heard loud noises' from Ramos house

From page A1

Leticia is an officer in the strategic planning and policy section of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

In her initial statement to the police, Leticia said three hooded men entered the house just as she was opening the door at around 5:30 a.m. The men then tied and gagged her and Alicia.

She was able to free herself at around 7 a.m. and went straight to the St. Claire's Medical Center, a block away from her residence.

Bloodied lip

She still had packing tape stuck to her neck, according to Garcia, quoting hospital guard Paterno Anhaw, who had interviewed Leticia. The tape appeared to have been used by the suspects to tie her up, the police officer said.

"(Anhaw) noticed that the victim had a bloodied lip and was holding pieces of cloth," Garcia said.

After she narrated to Anhaw what happened, the security guard called a police station nearby to report the robbery, Garcia said.

Unusual

Responding policemen found Alicia's body at around 7:30 a.m.

Asked if it was unusual for someone to go to the hospital first instead of reporting a house break-in to the police, Garcia said:

"It may appear unusual to us because normally you report that immediately to the police, but because of the shock and the circumstances occurring at the time, maybe the first reaction was to go first to the hospital, where she reported [what happened]."

The younger Ramos has yet to face investigators.

"She has not given a statement, but we understand. We are willing to wait," Garcia said.

Chief Insp. Manuel Santos Jr., chief of the Makati Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division, said Leticia "is the one who could divulge how many people entered the house, their features or, since the burglars were hooded, whether they had a heavy build, the description of their clothes."

Sister lone eyewitness

Santos said Leticia was the only one who could strengthen the initial finding that robbery was the motive behind the slay, as she alone could confirm whether anything was taken from the house.

But even while the lone eyewitness had yet to speak up, the investigation was moving.

Garcia said Task Force Ramos, a composite team of different police units investigating the case, had already questioned those who had contact with the sisters before Alicia was killed, including the Ramoses' neighbors and drivers.

The Scene of Crime Operation (Soco) team had also checked for fingerprints at the crime scene. But none were lifted because the crime scene was "very dusty."

Other materials were already submitted for fingerprinting. The police would know the results in two days, Garcia said.

Tissue samples

Tissue samples were also scraped from the fingernails of Alicia and Leticia Ramos.

The police said the body, when found, was lying on a bed on the second floor.

Initially, there were no signs of external wounds.

An autopsy revealed that Alicia died by suffocation. She had abrasions on her left foot and contusions on her right breast and left leg, the police said.

Businessman cleared of Karen Vertido rape

From page A1

gravating her stress.

The court gave more weight to the testimony of Custodio, who had claimed that he and Vertido were more than "acquaintances" and that the case was that of a lovers' relationship turned sour.

"If the private complainant is to be believed, even with such kind of resistance and pain, the accused was still able to proceed to the point of ejaculation, as implied by her testimony," Europa said in the ruling.

"Considering that the accused in this case is already in his sixties, the implied sexual prowess necessary to achieve what the private complainant claims happened is simply unbelievable."

Custodio, who was incarcerated at the Ma-a jail in 1997, is now a free man.

"He is out," his lawyer, Hildegardo Iñigo, said yesterday.

'Fact unchanged'

Declaring that "there was a violation of due process," Vertido's legal cousel, Evalyn Ursua, said they would take the case to the Court of Appeals and, if necessary, the Supreme Court.

Ursua also said Europa missed the rare opportunity of considering testimony on post-traumatic stress disorder as court evidence. She said it could have been the first time in the history of the Philippine legal system.

"Jose Custodio raped me. A legal decision does not change the fact that he raped me," a teary-eyed Vertido insisted at the press conference.

CUSTODIO: The court doubted his sexual prowess

VERTIDO: Defied public opinion to come forward with charges of rape

Her husband, Damaso, said the case was not only about Karen and their family but also about women as a whole.

Ursua said Europa's decision was "sending a message to rape victims nationwide that in this country, it is very difficult to win a rape case."

"Victims will be asking: What chance do I have if I file a case against rapists when even Karen Vertido did not win her case?" Ursua said.

'Unacceptable'

In her complaint, Vertido, then 42, said Custodio, then 61, raped her in a Davao motel after a business dinner.

A special panel of four prosecutors at the Davao city prosecutor's office was initially deadlocked at 2-2 after conducting a preliminary investigation.

The deadlock was broken by Joel Hipe, the acting city prosecutor, who dismissed the complaint for "lack of sufficient probable cause" on Aug. 8, 1996.

Hipe said he found "unacceptable" Vertido's claim that she was paralyzed and cowed into submission by Custodio.

"[The account] may inspire belief if the victim is a young lass, immature and unlettered and an amateur in the ways of the world. But Karen happens to be a career woman, married, above 40, highly educated and exposed to people, considering her job and background," he said.

But in October 1996, then Justice Secretary Teofisto Guingona reversed the ruling of the city prosecutor's office and ordered the filing of charges against Custodio.

On Nov. 21, 1996, a warrant for Custodio's arrest was issued by Davao Regional Trial Court Judge Jesus Quitain.

Custodio went into hiding but later surrendered to police at the Davao Doctors Hospital, where he was to have a gall bladder operation on Jan. 27, 1997.

Fourth judge

Quitain refused to allow bail for Custodio, saying the latter was arrested by police and did not surrender to the jurisdiction of the court.

Europa was the fourth judge to handle the case.

Quitain first handled it, but gave it up after five years.

RTC Branch 33 Judge Wenceslao Ibabao came next, but he had to inhibit himself when the prosecution questioned his impartiality.

The case was re-raffled to RTC Branch 14. But Judge William Layague also inhibited himself after the prosecution likewise questioned his impartiality. *Reports from Germelina A. Lacorte and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau; PDI Research*

Family court judge seeks marriage annulment

From page A1

Legal Assistance Group, has been representing himself at the pretrial hearings, Manalo said.

Award-winning

Cortes' reputation had been equated with the family court ever since the Supreme Court and the Foundation for Judicial Excellence named her National Centennial Municipal Trial Court Judge in 2002.

The same foundation awarded her a Judicial Excellence plaque in 1997. Five months after receiving the award, she was appointed to the RTC. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Police eye Echiverri 'personal affairs' as reason for killing

By Luige A. del Puerto

INVESTIGATORS are looking into the "personal affairs" of Dr. Niccolo Echiverri as they dig for a motive for his assassination on Monday.

Probers are eyeing three angles but could not yet disclose these, said Sr. Supt. Ericson Velasquez, Mandaluyong police director.

But investigators already excluded politics, robbery or profession as a motive in the killing of the doctor, he added.

"What we are trying to do is look into the personal affairs of the victim," Velasquez said, adding that Echiverri might have made someone angry in the past.

"We have excluded the angle that (this is work-related) because those who knew him said he had no enemy or anyone that he had crossed," he said.

Velasquez also disclosed that a suspect in police custody was the driver of the tricycle used by four gunmen in their escape.

"The driver confirmed that he was the one who drove the tricycle used as a getaway vehicle, but he did so at gunpoint," the official said.

His passenger confirmed that a gun was pointed at him all the time, Velasquez said.

"(The gunmen) asked to be brought to Martinez Street (a few blocks away from the crime scene) where they told the driver to turn back and not say a word about what had taken place," he said.

Velasquez said that out of fear for his safety, the driver, whose name is being withheld, hid in a house.

A witness positively identified the driver as one of six men who fled the area shortly after the shooting incident Monday morning.

There were only four gunmen, according to Velasquez. The other two men were the driver and his passenger. "That's why it seemed that there were six gunmen," he said.

Dr. Arsenio Abalos, father in law of the victim, had told police that he saw only four individuals leaving the crime scene.

Witnesses said three of the gunmen shot Echiverri, who was on board a Mitsubishi Lancer and was turning right on San Rafael Street from Celia Street.

At least six witnesses could identify the suspects if they see them again, police said.

The police released yesterday artist sketches of two of the suspects based on the descriptions of witnesses, including that of the tricycle driver.

Velasquez also disclosed that they checked the police blotter entries for the last three months but there was no record of a Echiverri stating his life was under threat.

Information that Echiverri had complained about a threat on his life, came from his father-in-law, the police chief said.

Velasquez said Abalos could not remember when Echiverri reported the threat to the police.

Echiverri might have done so last December or last January, Velasquez quoted Abalos as saying.

The body of the slain doctor lies at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City. Instead of lying on a coffin, Echiverri laid in bed.

"Last night, the kids played with their dad. They laid there and touched him," said Lee, Echiverri's younger brother.

His family chose to lay him in a single bed, his head resting on a pillow that sat against a silvercast head frame.

Lee said this was the idea of Ina, Echiverri's wife. She did not want their four children, ages between 8 and 13, to see their father in a box, he added. *With Tarra V. Quismundo and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

ARTIST'S sketches of two of the four men who killed Echiverri.

DOÑA Aurora Quezon and President Quezon (background) BOB RAZON

MMDA still in control of Metro roads, says BF

By Tarra V. Quismundo

DON'T ignore us just yet.

That was the message of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando to motorists in anticipation of confusion regarding a recent ruling of the Supreme Court against the agency.

In a hastily called press conference, Fernando said, "The Supreme Court ruling is not an en banc decision and is not yet final."

Ruling can be appealed

He added: "We have yet to receive an official copy of the said ruling, and we will file a motion for reconsideration within 15 days of receipt of the official copy of the ruling.

However, in an interview over GMA's 24 Oras, Fernando said they were still studying their options, noting that the ruling was about the confiscation of licenses which was no longer practiced.

In the meantime, he stressed that the MMDA would continue implementing road rules and apprehending errant drivers.

License confiscation

The Supreme Court second division last week upheld a Parañaque City Regional Trial Court (RTC) decision stopping the MMDA from confiscating driver's licenses without giving the violator due process through adjudication proceedings.

Laywer Dante Garin filed the case before the RTC in 1995 after an MMDA traffic enforcer confiscated his license for alleged illegal parking.

The Parañaque court ruled in favor of Garin and barred the MMDA from confiscating drivers' licenses during apprehensions.

Elevated to High Court

MMDA questioned the RTC ruling before the High Court.

"We are aware of the valiant efforts of the petitioner (MMDA) to untangle the increasingly traffic-snarled roads of Metro Manila," said the 18-page Supreme Court ruling penned by Justice Minita Chico-Nazario.

It, however, added that "these laudable intentions are limited by the MMDA's enabling law, which we can but interpret, and petitioner must be reminded that its efforts in this respect must be authorized by a valid law, or ordinance, or regulation arising from a legitimate source."

The ruling likewise stated that the MMDA could only enforce traffic rules enacted by a local or the national legislature.

But regarding the confiscation of licenses, the Supreme Court recognized that its ruling on the matter was already moot, as the MMDA no longer confiscated licenses under its Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) Scheme.

Under the MTT, MMDA traffic enforcers no longer confiscated licenses of errant drivers.

Instead, they are cited for specific violations for which they are required to pay fines. The fines can be paid in any Metrobank branch. *With Elaine Gonda, trainee*

MLQ, Doña Aurora 'reunite' at QC shrine

By Kristine Jade Tinio, trainee

AFTER nearly three decades of separation, the late President Manuel Luis Quezon will be "reunited" with his wife, the late Doña Aurora Aragon-Quezon.

For 27 years, the first president of the Commonwealth of the Philippines had lain alone at the Quezon Memorial Shrine in the city named after him.

Tomorrow, he will be joined finally by his wife, on the occasion of her 56th death anniversary.

Doña Aurora's remains will be transferred from the Manila North Cemetery to the Quezon shrine, where she will be kept inside a black granite crypt beside her husband.

The late President had been interred at the North Cemetery before he was transferred to the shrine on Aug. 19, 1978, his 100th birthday. Quezon, who died of tuberculosis on Aug. 1, 1944 in Saranac Lake, New York, was buried at Arlington Cemetery in New York. He was brought to the North Cemetery two years later.

Doña Aurora died on April 28, 1949 in an ambush staged by members of the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon, an underground alliance formed during World War II against the Japanese army. Her daughter, Ma. Aurora, and her daughter's husband, Philip Buencamino, were also killed in the incident.

The National Historical Institute and Manila and Quezon City officials have prepared a program marking the occasion, starting with the formal turnover of Doña Aurora's remains to her daughter Zenaida Quezon-Avanceña at 9 a.m. A motorcade will follow from the North Cemetery to the Sto. Domingo church for Mass, and from the church to the shrine. A funeral procession will start from the gates of the shrine to the Quezon mausoleum.

4 Pasay robbery suspects nabbed

By Fran Katigbak

POLICE arrested Monday night four suspects in the robbery of a bank in Pasay City last week.

Pascualito Casuela, 44; Delita Malinao-Casuela, 40; Ramonito Baguio, 27, and Gil Datu, 46—alleged members of the Waray Waray robbery gang, were arrested by the Pasay City police in separate operations in Pasay and Parañaque City.

Police reports said the group had robbed stall owners in the two cities.

The Casuelas, Baguio and Datu would be presented before employees of Union Bank in Pasay for identification.

Two .45-cal. pistol, a .38-cal. and several rounds of ammunition were seized by police from the group.

Maj. Gerry Agunod of the National Capital Region Police Office said the artist's sketches matched the features of the suspects who were detained at the Pasay police headquarters until yesterday afternoon. The suspects were later moved to Camp Crame for questioning.

METROBRIEFS

SC suspends lawyer

FORMER senatorial candidate and GMA legal commentator Melanio "Batas" Mauricio Jr. has been suspended for six months by the Supreme Court for asking "exorbitant" lawyers' fees from a client, but failing to render legal services.The high court's third division found Mauricio guilty of malpractice and gross misconduct for violating the Code of Professional Responsibility and the Lawyer's Oath. The decision was penned by Associate Justice Angelina Sandoval- Gutierrez. The high tribunal also directed Mauricio to return within 10 days the P56,000 he received from his client Valeriana Dalisay. The complainant accused Mauricio of demanding P25,000 as acceptance fee, as well as a filing fee of P8,000 Mauricio allegedly demanded additional payments until the legal fees reached P56,000, but no legal service was given. *Armand N. Nocum*

Telenovela seminar

The AIDS Society of the Philippines, together with the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Information Agency, will spearhead a workshop on writing television and radio drama at the Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Philippine Information Agency Office, Quezon City.The workshop is designed for television and radio drama writers who intend to enhance their techniques in creating a drama series. For details, contact Bella Soler at tel. nos. 523-1334, 536-5694, 5241261 loc. 144, telefax 536-5512, or e-mail aldsphil@pacific.net.ph.

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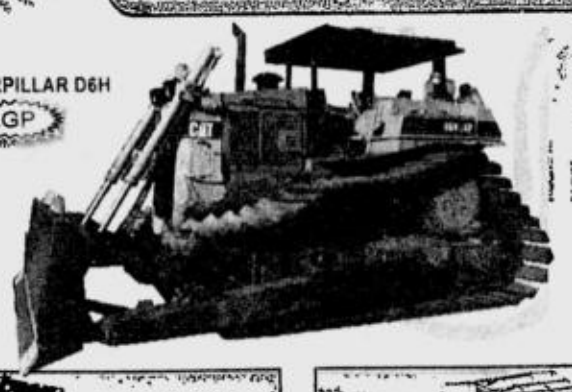

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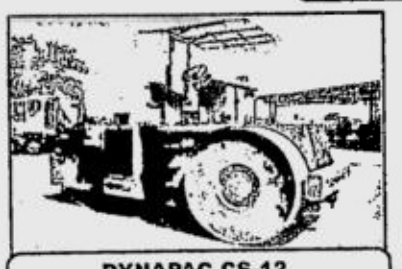

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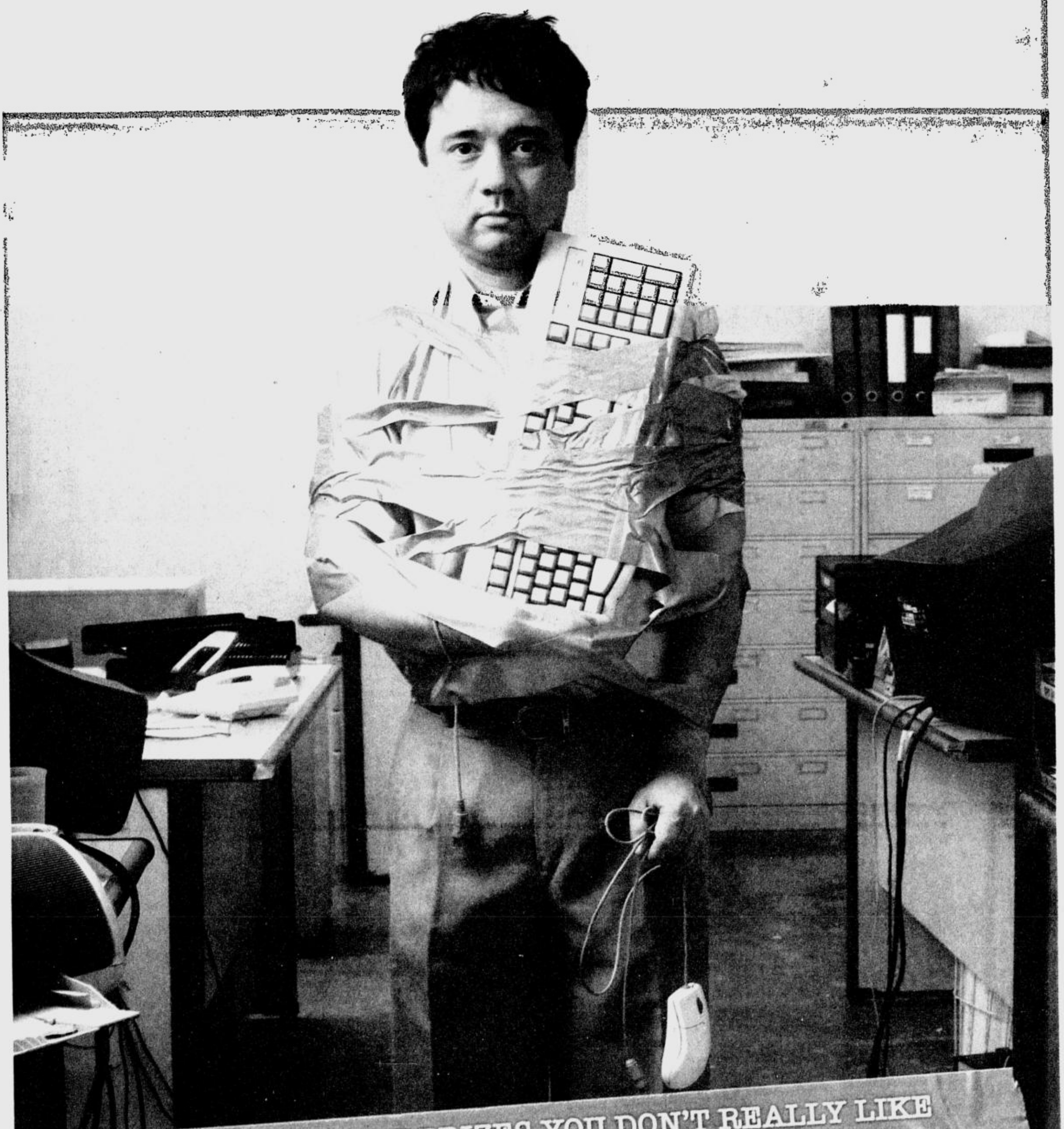

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Reyes: RP pool needs international exposure

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:45 p.m.—Red Bull vs Sta. Lucia
7:35 p.m.—Talk N Text vs FedEx

By Francis Ochoa

UNABLE to use the two games against an overmatched Iran squad as yardstick, national coach Chot Reyes yesterday graded the PBA national training pool as a whole in still non-quantifiable terms.

"On the minus side, we still lack familiarity," said Reyes. "On the plus side, the effort is really there."

And Reyes believes that there is only one way to gauge the pool on a more measured scale.

"We really need to get more practices and play more international competitions," said the Coca-Cola head-coach-on-leave.

The PBA training pool, split into two squads for a pair of exhibition matches against Iran, scored two flamboyant victories—79-60 by Team A and 90-75 by Team B—over the bewildered visitors. But it was not enough to judge the substance of the pool as a whole.

"Like for instance, we committed several turnovers. But that again boils down to unfamiliarity," explained Reyes. "We haven't really played enough together as a group."

"And the PBA players are no longer used to the physical play of the international game. Right now, in the PBA, a hand check is already a foul. In the international game, you are allowed to use a lot of your hands so it becomes really physical."

Reyes managed to grade the two squads, but his basis was mostly the number of points each team gave up against the Iranians. The mercurial mentor, however, admitted he was pleased to see the effort shown by the players in the pool.

"You have 20 players there—with no exceptions—who really want to make the team," Reyes revealed. "The effort and the desire to do well is really there this time."

"You have all the people talking about how the pros won't give their all for the national cause and you see American players not wanting to play for Team USA. So when you look at the effort these 20 players put into trying to make the team, it's really a refreshing sight."

Meanwhile, after climbing out of the cellar at the expense of the reigning champion, Sta. Lucia seeks to redeem itself from a humbling defeat to Red Bull when the Realtors play the Barako at the resumption of the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference today at the Araneta Coliseum.

Sidelined by a fractured bone on his left hand, Marlou Aquino's sick leave sparked the Realtors to dish off one of their best performances so far in the conference by getting back at Barangay Ginebra last week.

On a three-game roll, the Realtors now carry a 4-6 record and are the second hottest team in the league after Alaska, who won their last five games to climb to solo second at 6-4. Red Bull is at 5-4.

Talk 'N Text (5-4), meanwhile, hopes to get back on the winning track when the Phone Pals tangle with the FedEx Express in the other game.

Coming off a week's rest, FedEx (4-5) should come in more fresh for the game. *With reports from June Navarro*

PBA takes over National 5

By Musong Castillo

AFTER much wait and all sorts of speculations, the Philippine Basketball Association yesterday unanimously agreed to help the country's basketball program down to the littlest detail.

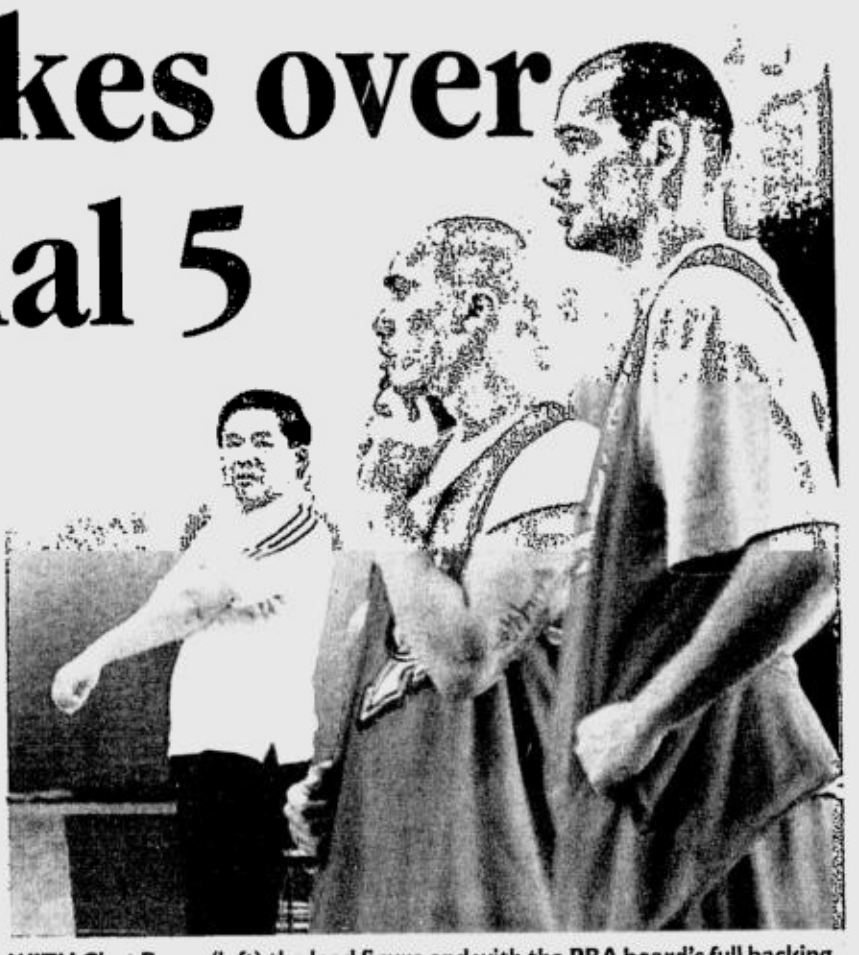
Asia's first professional cage league will take over the team to be sent to the Southeast Asian Basketball Association, an event chair Buddy Encarnado once described as the lowest international tournament.

In a meeting yesterday, the PBA accepted the request of the Philippine Olympic Committee for it to take over the country's basketball program, relegating the Basketball Association of the Philippines to an approving body.

Coach Chot Reyes will sit as consultant to the team at the very least and was given permission by the board to coach if he deems necessary, provided that he is given a free hand in the final composition of the team.

"We support the undertaking to form a strong national team for the Seaba," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala in a statement.

Under the scheme, players coming from the PBA, the PBL and the collegiate leagues will be made available at Reyes' request to augment the present training pool being funded by the BAP and Cebuana Lhuillier.



WITH Chot Reyes (left) the lead figure and with the PBA board's full backing, the national team to the Seaba championships could include the likes of Mike Cortez and Danny Seigle (right). AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Reyes said there's no clear picture yet as to the composition of the Seaba men's team.

"I still have to talk with the coaching staff and evaluate the available players," said Reyes.

"We welcome this opportunity," said PBL chair Raymund Yu. "Our league will be ready to cooperate and lend its formidable resources to this undertaking."

The acceptance of the PBA puts an end to the crusade launched by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, who formed the National Basketball Commission after RP-Cebuana Lhuillier suffered a humiliating loss in a second-tier tournament recently.

Though Cojuangco had said that he would prefer that Cebuana Lhuillier stay on as sponsor, it is highly unlikely that the PBA would lend its stars to play under a different banner.

The PBA has a contract with San Miguel Corp. for its training pool, which it inked at the start of the year.

SEA Games info soon on the web

INFORMATION regarding the 23rd Southeast Asian Games will soon be readily accessible with the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee's website to be launched hopefully before the month ends.

This was one of the salient points bared by Philippine Olympic Committee president and Philsoc vice chair Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday as he guaranteed that everything is falling into place as far as the country's hosting of the 23rd SEA Games is concerned.

"We're getting where we want to go," said Cojuangco, who guested during yesterday's PSA Sports Forum. "We're moving."

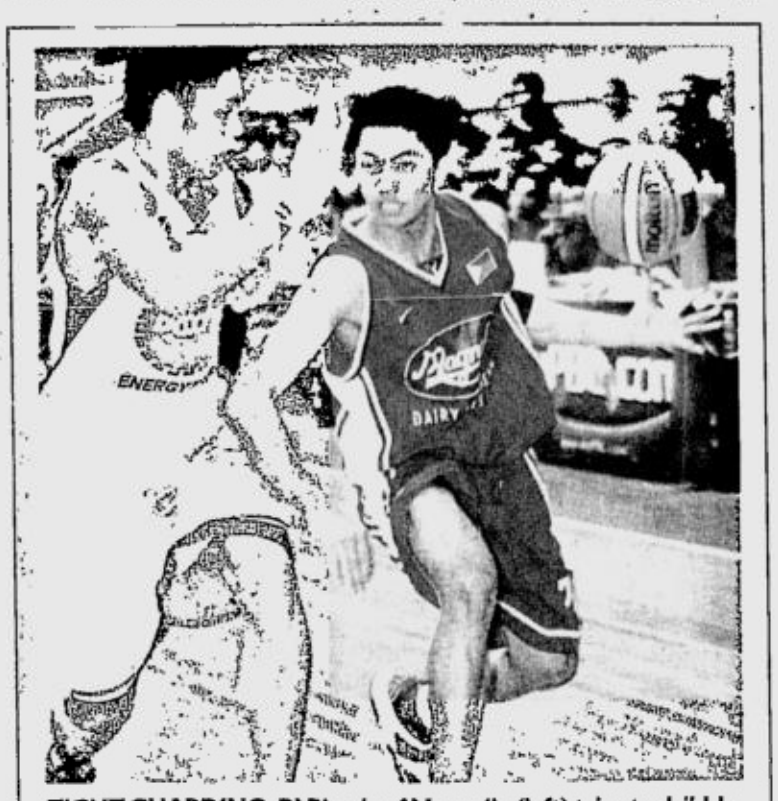
The website, which will regularly be updated as preparations hit full throttle, is now being put up by the Philscoc technical committee.

Cojuangco, who also heads the RP equestrian association, cited developments which he said point to a successful run-up to the SEA Games where the Philippines hopes to nail the overall championship.

First, he said, will be the signing of the P100-million sponsorship of the SEA Games by telecommunications giant Globe today. Aside from Globe, availing of the same package were PLDT and the Lucio Tan Group of Companies.

More sponsors, those worth P50 million, P30 million or anything less than that, are expected to come in as Philsoc tries to raise the needed P1 billion to stage the Games. President Macapagal-Arroyo has earmarked P300 million from her own social fund.

The scheduled training in China of more than a hundred RP athletes, Cojuangco added, is another good sign that the preparations are in place.



TIGHT GUARDING: RJ Rizada of Magnolia (left) tries to dribble past Romar Menor of Bacchus in their PBL game won by Magnolia last night. *(See story on page A29)* AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SPORTSWATCH

Suico risks OPBF title

LAPU-LAPU CITY—Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation super-featherweight king Randy "Komong Bato" Suico stakes his title against Thailand's Muangfahlek Klatwichien in a 12-round bloodbath topbilling the "Kadaugan sa Mactan 3" card at the Lapu-Lapu Sports Complex tonight. Suico came in at an exact 130 lbs, while Klatwichean had to shed off an extra pound before meeting the regulatory limit during the official weigh-in held at the Wakee Salud Gym and supervised by Games and Amusements Board boxing chief Emmanuel Flores. ***Salven Lagumbay***

BF Resort paces Intervillage

BF RESORT Village turned in a 307-point effort under the Stableford scoring system to lead the first round of the south sector of the Nokia Intervillage golf tournament which kicked off its 2005 season Monday at The Riviera In Silang, Cavite. Robert Reyes, a 10-handicapper, fired 40 points while Fred Magallon, Louie Bustamante, Arnold Jumalon and Jojo Bondoc turned in 39 points each for BF Resort, which took advantage of defending champion Alabang Hills' last-minute withdrawal to seize control in the event exclusive to Parañaque, Las Piñas and Muntinlupa villages.

Ayo steers 2 teams to finals

COACH Emmanuel Ayo scored a double victory in the Naga elims of the adidas Streetball Challenge, steering Team Allude in seniors play while powering Team Arvinda in the girls' side of the Pocket Tournament at the Ateneo de Naga courts over the weekend. Ayo drew balanced scoring from John Paul Disuanco, Emmanuel Claro, Joshua Tisoy and Jose Ma. Calandria as the Ateneo-A squad rolled to a 15-10 victory over Team Daroga of Computer Communication Development Institute. Ayo then anchored Team Arvinda's 8-4 romp over Team Mali for the girls' title.

GCAP derby finals tonight

THE FIERCE battle of big-time cockers and breeders continues when the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby finals get going tonight at the Las Piñas Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. Unheralded bets Marvin of Mayor Nene Aguilar and Henry Medina and Fatman Mikko of Pepito Ngo posted three wins each in last Monday's eliminations. Another Aguilar entry, St. Joseph, posted two wins and one loss. Also with three victories were Mulawin A of Rudy Albano, NML SP 3-cock June 8 of Tony Lasala and Sabong Pinoy Live of Patrick Antonio. Call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

Mitra Cup 4 at Roligon

THE EXCITING battle of provincial derby champions will be featured anew today when the much-fancied "Mitra Cup 4-Cock Derby" sizzles at Roligon Mega Cockpit with 60 fights on tap. The derby starts at 6 p.m. To be hosted by Rep. Baham Mitra and Dado Mitra, at stake is a jackpot prize of P300,000. Among the competitors are gamefowl breeders from Batangas, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Pampanga, Tarlac, Palawan and Negros Occidental. For inquiries, call 833-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812.

Tabuena leads Junior World qualifier

MIGUEL Tabuena, Crystal Superal and Jik Jik Abdon made bold moves in the searing heat as they emerged the new leaders in their respective divisions even as Miko Yee kept Tonton Asistio at bay at the resumption of the Samsung Jungolf Tour's Junior World qualifying tournament at the Sherwood Hills Golf and Country Club course in Trece Martires, Cavite.

Tabuena, recently crowned Thailand International Junior champion, matched par 68 from the shortened tees of the windswept course to overtake JR Gonzales and Bino dela Paz in boys Class D.

TABUENA: Matched par 68 PDI PHOTO

Eight down after the first round and four behind at the start of the round, the multititled Tabuena posted a 269 aggregate after 72 holes of the grueling 108-qualifier to inch ahead of erstwhile leader Gonzales, who shot 73-270, and Dela Paz (72-270).

Superal pounced on the sudden collapse of three-day leader Regan de Guzman with a one-under 71 effort that pulled her from third to first in girls Class B. She was at 304, five up on Cyna Rodriguez (71-304) and now six shots ahead of De Guzman, who held an eight-shot lead but scored an 88 for 205.

Yee kept a two-shot advantage over Asistio after both turned in 73s for 286 and 288, respectively, but allowed Matthew Manotoc and Miko Alejandro to come closer. Manotoc shot a 71 for 297 and Alejandro came through with a 70 for 298.

Abdon (76-312), meanwhile, outscored Adrian Woo (80-314), to seize control in boys Class B, Bambee dela Paz saw her lead in girls Class A reduced to four by Linnel de Villa, Dottie Ardina remained ahead in girls Class C and Christina Potenciano continued to pull away in girls Class D of the tourney also sponsored by Philippine Airlines and Unilever.

Mendoza, RC Baguio II shine in Rotary golfest

MENDOZA

CHARTER president Sonny Mendoza of the RC Makati Southwest emerged as the biggest individual winner in the recent RGFFP golf fellowship tournament in Baguio City by acing hole No. 13 at Camp John Hay—one of five three-pin greens in the three-day, 36-hole team and individual competition.

For his third ace, Mendoza won a 29-inch flat TV later during the awards night. He completed a double whammy by winning the grand raffle prize—a luxurious Breitling watch courtesy of Lucerne Jewellers.

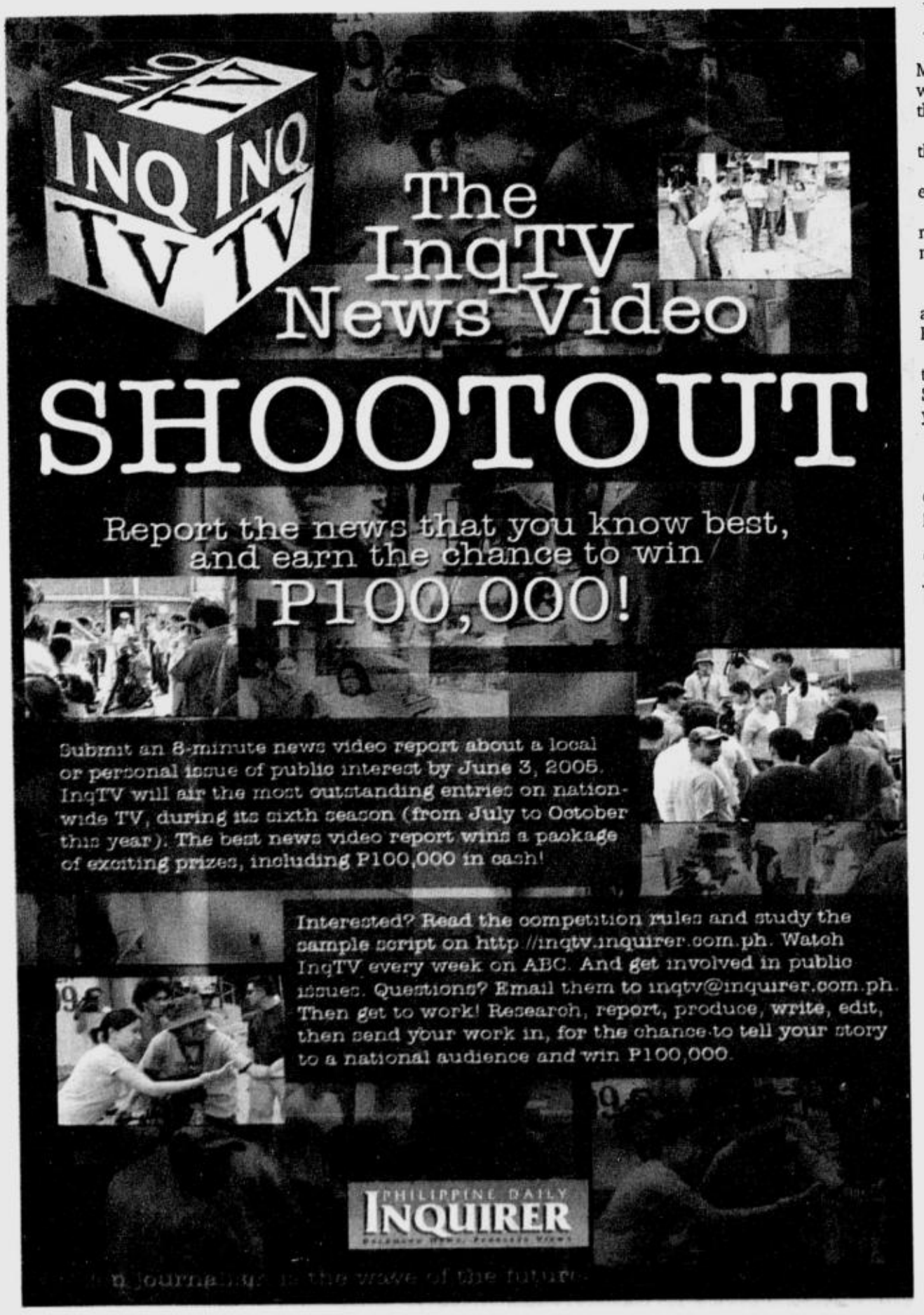
RC Baguio II kept its overall title, coming from behind to nip RC Bagumbayan, 174 to 173, at Baguio Country Club.

RC Bagumbayan I ruled the Founders Division with 173 points, edging RC Makati Paseo I, while RC Dagupan 1 beat RC Metro West Triangle, 157 to 154, to top the Governors Division.

RC Baguio I was the runaway winner of the Presidents Division, beating RC Bagumbayan/Quezon City by five points in the event sponsored by Pagcor, Osim, Smart Gold, Petron, Ortigas & Co., Integrated Pipe Specialists, Asia Brewery, Alegre Beach Resort, Concepcion-Carrier Air-conditioning Co., Cathay Pacific, Cathay Land, Enriquez Security Services, Corporate Air, Futura Window Décor Products, Subic Homes, Citibank, Community Innovations Inc. and Vision Express.

In the individual competition, Larry Patnongon of RC Makati Paseo I became low gross champion with a score of 103 points, while Mars Garcia of RC Baguio II emerged overall champion by nosing out PDG Danny Yu of RC Bagumbayan.

Yu settled for the Flight A title with 93 points, Chito Cruz of RC Metro West Triangle topped Flight B and Fred Nakpil of RC Bulacan II ran away with the Flight C plum. RGFFP president Pocholo Borromeo thanked the sponsors and participants.



Is the POC being run Godfather-style?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

MICHAEL Keon did create quite a stir when he hit what he perceived were sloppy preparations for this year's Southeast Asian Games.

Keon said the Philippines did not have a shot at the Games' overall championship.

That statement expectedly made headlines earlier this year.

Not only because it was Keon, the Marcos nephew noted for his frankness, who offered the no-nonsense diagnosis.

He simply hit the nail on the head.

From what we know, Keon has proceeded to assume his post as national training director for RP athletes to this year's SEA Games.

But nobody has dared ask the fellow how things stand now as far as preparedness for the SEA Games, which the country hosts later this year, goes.

* * *

For sure, things have started to move.

Whether we like it or not, Keon's statement has obviously set off a better national athletes training program in motion.

It was no plain coincidence that Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco was caught on the receiving end of Keon's blunt pronouncement.

Maybe Cojuangco took Keon's words as a frontal challenge.

In fact, Cojuangco's spokesperson, Joey Romasanta, replied curtly that Keon was entitled to his own opinion.

Well, it's no secret how critics had predicted Cojuangco, being a politician, would do no better than his predecessors at the POC.

There were initial fears the former congressman from Tarlac would employ a wishy-washy rule at the POC and use his position to broaden and fortify his political turf.

* * *

Well, for starters, Cojuangco did not play his role in a loud manner.

He did speak out, but only when necessary.

So what does Michael Keon feel now about the country's preparations for the SEA Games?

We did ask around and we can report that Cojuangco's approval rating, unlike those of the main occupants of Malacañang, is on the up and up.

It would indeed be an understatement to say that Cojuangco has proved critics wrong.

His handling of the boiling problem in the amateur basketball association, when he bluntly called for the replacement of the Lhuillier-backed team after it suffered a shameful setback, was welcomed like a winning three-point basket.

The great thing about this move was the very dignified style Cojuangco had applied in creating a super basketball committee.

* * *

The happy results could've come only from a master, a born conductor who batted hard for harmony, despite the presence of disruptive forces.

While many had felt the outright exclusion of the wildly performing sec-gen of the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) was a must in order to move on, Cojuangco agreed to keep the notorious underachiever within the committee.

Of course, the wings of this fellow, who had earlier been ordered deported for faking his identity, had been promptly clipped.

Another thing. During the cage committee deliberations, Cojuangco listened quietly as one major stakeholder, an open backer of the discredited BAP sec-gen, presented the salient details of a blueprint for basketball development originally submitted by former Asian Basketball Confederation secretary-general Moying Martelino as though these were his original concept.

In literature, that amounts to shameless plagiarism.

Cojuangco knew somebody was stealing from somebody in order to boost his dwindled stocks.

In fact, Cojuangco did not have to order Go Teng Kok, one of his lieutenants, to stop patronizing the hated BAP sec-gen, a raging GTK protégé.

Next heard of, GTK had himself disowned the alien after he insisted on selling his cheap ideas to the basketball superbody.

Things continue to turn for the better, often in a secret manner, on the local basketball front.

Meanwhile, there are those who say Don Peping Cojuangco does his thing at the POC like Don Vito Corleone.

RACING TIPS
AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Queen of Gala 2. Ahead of Time 3. Air Surprise 4. Magnanimous
Race 2—1. I Miss You 2. Magic Bullet 3. Zarafun Mo 4. Princess Sarah
Race 3—1. Calvin's Magic 2. King Yoji 3. Iron Will 4. Secret Quest
Race 4—1. Smart Choice 2. Strong Jays 3. Shining Speed 4. Brutus 5. Red Strike
Race 5—1. Juanito's Dream 2. Western Dancer 3. Golden Harry 4. Southern Prince
Race 6—1. Amazing Firenze 2. Queen Josephine 3. Gorgeous Sand 4. Tervalac
Race 7—1. Express Strike 2. Gelay's Charm 3. Loaded 4. Triple Seven
Race 8—1. Sweet Felicity 2. Do It David 3. Speed Admiral 4. Fille D'Honneur 5. Sanry Forex 6. Bronte

MADRIGAL

Alessandra tops Toyota karting

BANGKOK—Filipino karting prodigy Alessandra Madrigal of Alessandra Racing Team Inc. bested defending champion Cris Yachiroda and Thai star Atirat Rojanastien to win the Toyota Youth Kart Experience Challenge Cup 2005 last Sunday at the Bangkok Racing Circuit in Srinakarin, Thailand.

It was the second international triumph for the 9-year-old Madrigal. She is supported by principal sponsor ING Private Banking, major sponsors Puma and Globe Gizmo, and co-sponsors Dickies and Petron Ultron.

Also supported by Thomas Raldorf and the crews of Italkart and the Pizza Company, Madrigal steered her Parilla-powered Italkart to victory in the Trulli 85 class with a time of 9:15.931.

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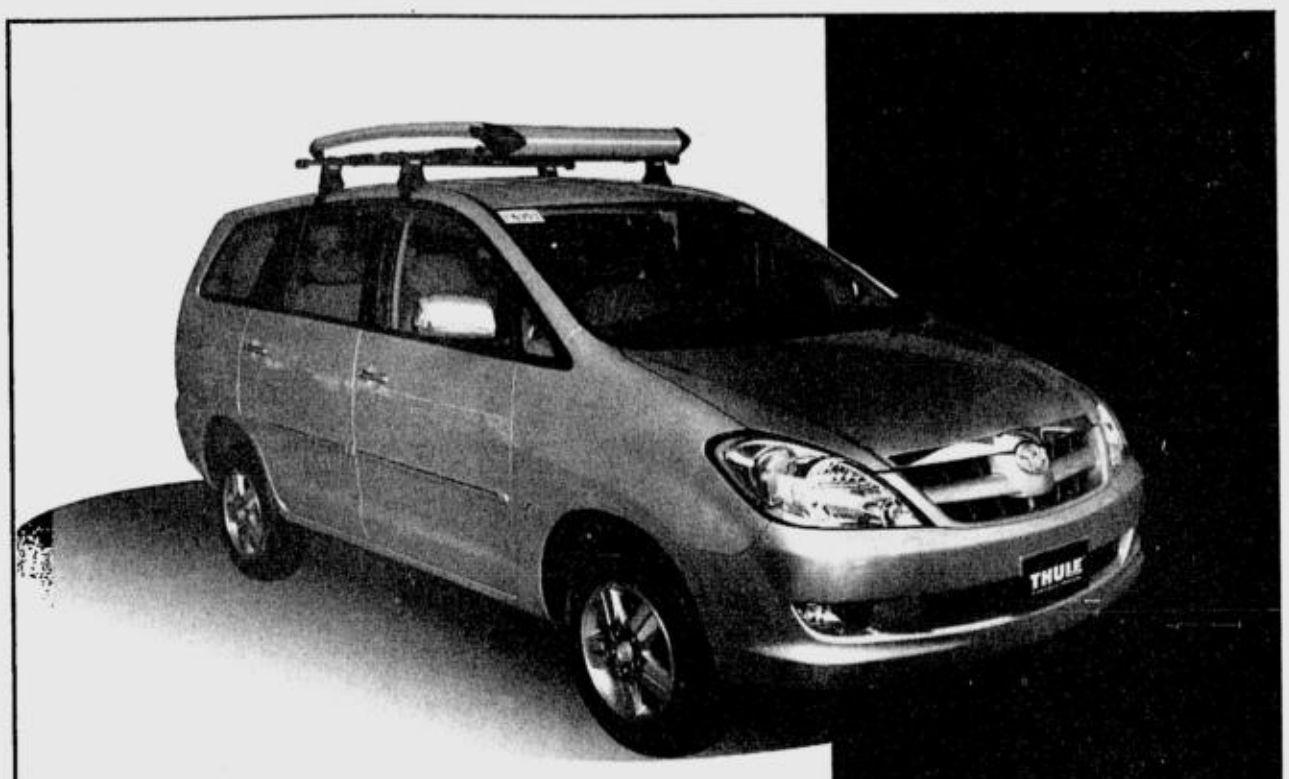

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Rockets nip Mavs for 2-0 cushion

YAO Ming (left), Tracy McGrady, and Bob Sura (right) celebrate the win

DALLAS, Texas—Tracy McGrady drilled a 21-footer with 2.2 seconds left to lift the Houston Rockets to a 113-111 victory over Dallas and a commanding 2-0 lead in their National Basketball Association Western Conference playoff series.

While the Mavericks found themselves in a deep hole in their first-round series after Monday's action, the Indiana Pacers rallied for a victory over the Boston Celtics that knotted their Eastern Conference series at one game apiece.

Houston's Yao Ming scored 33 points and McGrady added 28 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds as the fifth-seeded Rockets silenced the Dallas crowd for the second time in three days.

McGrady scored 34 points in Houston's 98-86 victory in game one and was at it again in this one.

McGrady's biggest basket came in the game's biggest moment. After Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki sank a jumper that tied it at 111-111 with 10 seconds left, the Rockets opted not to call timeout and McGrady dribbled upcourt.

Yao set a screen at the 3-point arc and McGrady dribbled right. Keith Van Horn inexplicably stepped back instead of forward, giving McGrady room to sink the shot.

"In the huddle coach asked me, if those guys score, did I want to call a timeout. I said 'No, let's surprise them,'" McGrady said. "Yao set a good screen for me. I was confident and I hit a good shot."

Michael Finley's jumper missed at the buzzer, leaving the fourth-seeded Mavericks—who began the postseason with dreams of an NBA championship—staring a sweep in the face as they head to Houston for two games.

In NBA history, only the Los Angeles Lakers in 1969 and Houston Rockets in 1994 have erased a 0-2 deficit and won a best-of-seven series after losing the first two games at home.

The Pacers head home with their series tied 1-1, thanks to a gritty performance in Boston.

"There's no way this team is going to go quietly," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "No way. We've been through too much."

Veteran Reggie Miller scored 28 points—just two of them in the fourth quarter when the Pacers rallied for an 82-79 victory.

The sixth-seeded Pacers bounced back from an ugly loss in game one and stole homecourt advantage from the third-seeded Celtics.

"We had our lulls tonight, but I think the tempo was set just right," Miller said.

Antoine Walker made a running hook shot with 2:41 left, but that was Boston's last basket.

Walker missed two short shots and Anthony Johnson gave the Pacers the lead for good at 80-78 on a layup with 1:09 to play. Pierce had a chance to tie it, but split a pair of free throws.

Miller, quiet in the fourth quarter to that point, used a headfake to step inside the three-point circle and sank a 17-footer on the move for an 82-79 edge with 37 seconds left. *AFP*

NBA on TV today

THE SACRAMENTO Kings take on the Seattle SuperSonics at 10:30 a.m. on Sports Plus. The Sonics lead the series, 1-0. Meanwhile, the Miami Heat battle the New Jersey Nets at 8 a.m. on Solar Sports. The Heat lead the series, 1-0.

P. Princesa riders win

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY continued to make its case for a top-three slot as Mayor Edward Hagedorn's team romped off with two gold medals in Day Seven yesterday of the First Philippine Velo Challenge at the Amoranto Velodrome.

Former Tour champion Rolando Pagnanawon, with a time of two minutes and 19.6 seconds, topped the Veterans 1,600-m massed start while teammate Bryan Dimacali (2:09.67 seconds) won the Elite men's 1,600-m massed start as Puerto Princesa made its way to third place in the event co-presented by the First Gentleman's Foundation of lawyer Jose Miguel Arroyo and Air21 (Sagot Ko, Padala Mo!)-Tour Pilipinas Inc.

MayniLA of Mayor Lito Atienza and MASCO chair Ali Atienza, and Tagaytay International Convention Center (TICC) of Mayor Abraham Tolentino also won two gold medals each, as did front-runner Elixir in the event also supported by Pagcor, the Philippine Sports Commission and Philippine Olympic Committee, Isuzu D-Max, Sharp Phils., San Miguel Corp.-Viva Mineral Water, Vittoria Tires, 93.9 iFM, RMN dzXL 558, David's Salon and Intrasports.

Frederick Chua (2:42.03 seconds) won the Executives 1,600-m massed start while Marites Bitbit (3:07.04 seconds) took the gold in the Elite women's 1,600-m massed start to spearhead Elixir's campaign yesterday.

NBA goes 'under'

HANFORD yesterday gave the public a sneak peek into the first ever set of NBA designed undergarments in the world. Hanford showed a glimpse of the jockeys, boxer briefs, supporters, tank tops, vest and shirts during the one-day Gatorade "Get Into the NBA" event at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. The undergarments, initially available only in the Philippines, will be launched next month through a series of activities. Hanford was the official underwear of the Philippine Basketball Association and the University Athletic Association of the Philippines basketball tournament. It also supported the Philippine basketball team that won the gold in the last South East Asian games in Vietnam.

INQBOX

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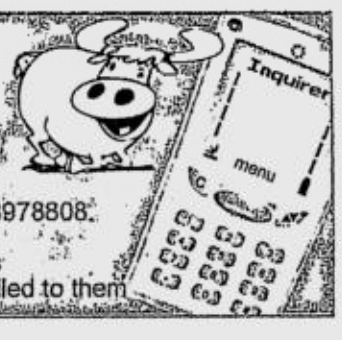

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

WOWmalingMaLi!

9PM SABADO SABAGO!

ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Sports	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Yes Yes Show			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Look Who's Talking	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Hungry Heart	Knockout	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Dama	All About Eve (6:45 PM)	Full House (9:15 PM)		Nuts Entertainment Newswatch Now		Corge For Truth	Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Save Tactics	The Ring	First 48 (Hrs)		Trading Spouses		Extreme Make-Over			Pangako Mo		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		On Air Tambayan		Direk	Junior Reyes Report	Bestfriends	Celebrity Single	Retro TV	IBC News Tonite	Breaking Barriers	
JackTV		Wwe Heat		WWE Confidential		Fantastic Four	Static Shock	Godzilla	Incredible Hulk	Stargate SG1		Wwe Raw				Wwe Heat		WWE Confidential	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Live!		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Simple Life	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Eliminate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Complete Savages	What I Like About You	Who Wants To Marry My Dad		Last Comic Standing		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Ang Tiser Kong Pogi				Do Re Mi				Waray			Persona	Gumapang Ka Sa Lusak				Lalaban Ako	
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	C.S.I.			Las Vegas		News Central	Oprah		The Good Life With Cory Quirino
AXN		The Amazing Race 7		Maximum Exposure (Season II)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		7 Days (Season III)		Alias (Season III)		The Amazing Race 7		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: NY (Season I)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol		Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol		Philly		JAG		Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Showbiz Asia		Taboo		Dangerous Jobs		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow!Dogs With Jobs Kenq Mentor, Prince	Chimp Diaries	About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Showbiz Asia		Taboo	
Solar Sports	The Badminton Masters '05 Semi-Finals		NBA TV Daily		WTA Qatar Total Open '05				Women's Volleyball '04				NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs First Round					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Motto Motto	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special 101 Most Shocking Moments		You're Invited	Life & Style		Style Star	Nigella Bites II	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO				Hoodlum & Son			Mortal Thoughts (5:35 PM)			City By The Sea (7:15 PM)				Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle			My Little Eye (10:45 PM)		
Star Movies	The Chamber (2:35 PM)				For Love Of The Game				Die Hard (6:45 PM)					Die Hard 2: Die Harder				Courage Under Fire (11:05PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	LPGA Takeful Classic Final rd				Motorsport Asia	UEFA Champions League 2004/05					Goals!	Sportscenter Asia	Soccer FIFA Fever	Premier Snooker League '04 Crewe, England				Winter X Games VIII Classix Stomped & Slammed	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Unfabulative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax		Tom Curtain (3:15 PM)					Free Willy				Shelter Island (7:35 PM)			Red Dragon				Ghost (11:05PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Missing		HCA The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Missing		Bug			Strong Medicine (10:35PM)		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Science Mysteries		Science Frontiers		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Year Without A Summer		Ultimate Guide		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Hour Asia	
Sports Plus		Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf Day1				MCI Heritage Classic Highlights		Arena Football Philadelphia @ New York						Inside the PGA	Bikini Destination	World Poker Tour Ep.14 C'ships			
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		Tak Ko To		Linya		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival				Paco Park Presents	

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

RIME figures of the Lead to Gold program launched by the Lead Institute of pen the "Remember the Titans" exhibit at the NBC Tent in the Fort. Present the the ribbon-cutting of the exhibit, featuring the glory poses of great s in the past, were (left to right) Barangay Ginebra team manager and ball legend Allan Caidic, Lead trustee Lorenzo Roxas, 1956 Melbourne ian Tuding Lozada, Philippine Badminton Association vice president Gen. Aglipay, Philippine Daily Inquirer president and Lead vice chair Alexandra Romualdez, and Lead executive director Fr. Carmelo A. Caluag II.
ntally, Caidic is also the San Miguel project director for boxing and baseball in ar's SEA games.

ead Institute stages -day sports festival

EAD Institute of Sport kicks off its ous gold medal program with the n City Sports Fiesta on May 1 at neo de Manila Campus.

day-long sports event will include a l festival, a taekwondo tournament executive/celebrity badminton tilt. ball, taekwondo and badminton key areas of Lead's thrust in its Gold program.

newly-formed non-stock, non-prof- nization for the advancement of hopes to bag a taekwondo gold in 08 Beijing Olympics, a badminton Cup title by 2012 and a Tiger Cup ti- Asean Gold in football by 2015.

Institute was launched last April 15 BC Tent in the Fort.

Lead to Gold program provides n training programs for both ath- nd coaches to better prepare them rnational competitions.

The launch also showcased a Remember the Titans photo exhibit backed by San Miguel Corp. and Kodak Philippines.

Recently, Lead extended financial aid to the taekwondo team that saw action in the 2005 WTF World Taekwondo Championships in Madrid, Spain. And last March 14, Lead, working with the Philippine Football Federation, helped send the Under-13 National Football Team to the Festival of Football in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Lead is headed by chair Manuel V. Pangilinan, vice chair Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, trustees Bienvenido Tantoco III, Lorenzo T. Roxas, Carlos A. Velez, Jaime Noel J. Santos, and Michael B. Zalamea. Fr. Carmelo A. Caluag II S.J. is Lead's executive director. Rustan's and the Philippine Daily Inquirer are also active supporters of Lead's program.

For more information about Lead to Gold or the Sports Fiesta, call 6336321.

Jewels shine for 6th straight time

GAMES TOMORROW (*Pasig Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Toyota Otis
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Welcoat

By Jasmine W. Payo

CHRIS Baluyot drilled 17 points off the bench to help Montaña Pawnshop seal its sixth straight win, 86-59, against Nenaco-San Beda in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the Pasig Sports Center.

"It's a good thing that our bench delivered," said coach Robert Sison, who also cited the impressive performances of Bryan Tolentino and rookie Ken Bono. "I really gave them more minutes to give them more confidence and help them in the long run."

There were no surprises in the first game as Magnolia Ice Cream whipped Bacchus Energy Drink, 97-75.

Arwind Santos delivered a typically sensational performance with 17 points, eight rebounds, two steals and two blocks, while Neil Rañeses chipped in 15 markers for the defending champions.

The Ice Cream Wizards remained at fourth place with a 3-3 record, but coach Koy Banal isn't worried about his team's surprisingly dismal start.

"Last conference, we also started at 2-3 but we went on a streak after that," said Banal. "So we're using that as a springboard. We just need to focus."

Bacchus' record fell to 1-5, while Nenaco-San Beda absorbed its sixth straight loss.

Noy Javier had a strong shooting performance in the first half that kept Nenaco-San Beda within striking distance, 38-32, at the break.

But Javier went scoreless in the second half after firing 16 points, allowing the Montaña veterans to turn their slim 40-37 edge into a 54-41 buffer in the third quarter.

The Jewels extended their lead by as many as 25 points, 78-53, with Baluyot scoring 13 points in the final quarter.

The Wizards, meanwhile, had an easier time as they held on to a double-digit lead almost the entire game after a 24-12 cushion in the first quarter.

Meanwhile, commissioner Chino Trinidad said that the PBL is now closely coordinating with coach Chot Reyes regarding the composition of the new RP team that will compete in Seaba this June.

"We already consulted our coaches and discussed the players who will probably comprise the team," said Trinidad, noting that Reyes picked Montaña's Robert Sison, Magnolia's Koy Banal, Nenaco-San Beda's Nash Racela and Toyota Otis-Letran's Louie Alas as the top candidates to replace RP team head coach Boysie Zamar.

"Chot will make the final decision on this one," added Trinidad. "At this point, I'm helping him manage. The PBL will adjust its schedule accordingly."

The scores:

First game

MAGNOLIA 97—Santos 17, Rañeses 15, Catli 9, Misolas 8, Miranda 6, Chan 6, Barcellano 6, Co 5, Garcia 5, Caceres 5, Jones 4, Yabut 4, Williams 3, Isip 2, Rizada 2.

BACCHUS 75—Menor 18, Epondulan 11, Holper 9, Coyukang 8, Vizcarra 7, Te 6, Cordero 6, Hubalde 4, Abadia 4, Cruz 2, Uy 0, Nallon 0.

Quarters: 24-12, 47-26, 73-48, 97-75.

Second game

MONTAÑA 86—Baluyot 17, Bono 13, Capus 12, Salvador 11, Tolentino 8, Vergara 7, Dela Cuesta 6, Juntilla 4, Guerrero 3, Mercado 3, Bagulon 2.

NENACO 59—Aljamal 19, Javier 16, Angeles 9, Baldivia 4, Arbole 3, Razon 2, Yousif 2, Paterno 2, Fasano 1, Soriano 0, Cruz 0, Timonera 0, Antonio 0.

Quarters: 22-13, 38-32, 61-43, 86-59.

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 SAHARA • THX
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

2 GUESS WHO?
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE INTERPRETER
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

4 THE JACKET
11:15 1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

6 THE WEDDING DATE
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

7 PARAISO
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

8 BOSO
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

9 SAMARA RING 2
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 THE PACIFIER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE INTERPRETER
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

2 SAHARA
11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50

3 GUESS WHO?
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

4 THE WEDDING DATE
10:20 12:15 2:10 4:05 6:00 7:55 10:00

5 THE JACKET
10:40 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50

6 BOSO
10:40 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:20 9:40

7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11:10 1:50 4:25 7:00 9:40

METRO EAST 682-8183 • 682-8199

1 PARAISO
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 SAHARA
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

3 THE WEDDING DATE
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 SAMARA RING 2
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00

5 GUESS WHO?
11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

6 THE JACKET
12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30

7 THE INTERPRETER
11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
10:55 1:50 4:45 7:40 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:20

2 THE INTERPRETER
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25

3 PARAISO
10:15 12:25 2:35 4:45 6:55 9:00

4 THE JACKET
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:20

5 GUESS WHO?
11:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25

6 SAHARA
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25

7 RESERVE

8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 SAHARA
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 GUESS WHO
4 THE INTERPRETER

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 BOOGEYMAN
4 PARAISO

CAINTA 240-4681

1 THE INTERPRETER
2 GUESS WHO?
3 SAHARA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

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STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 THE PACIFIER
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 ONG BAK
4 ALONE IN THE DARK
5 SAHARA

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 HOSTAGE
2 BE COOL
3 BIRTH
4 SAMARA RING 2
5 CLOSER

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD
3 PARAISO
4 BUNSHINSABA
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 BE COOL
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 BOOGEYMAN
4 ONG BAK

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 PARAISO
2 GUESS WHO
3 BOOGEYMAN
4 ONG BAK
5 OKAY KA PARE KO
6 SAHARA

STARMILLS (045) 876-1927 (045) 961-5270

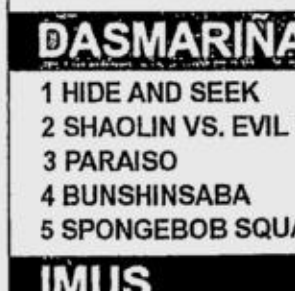
1 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 THE PACIFIER
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 BE COOL
6 ONG BAK

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 THE PACIFIER
2 CONFIDENCE
3 BE COOL
4 HIDE AND SEEK
5 CURSED
6 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 SAMARA RING 2
4 THE PACIFIER
5 CLOSER
6 ALONE IN THE DARK



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Activity Center

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At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
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April 23 & 30, 2005

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AYALA CINEMAS

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THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 GUESS WHO	2 XXX 2	3 THE INTERPRETER	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 GUESS WHO	2 THE WEDDING DATE	3 THX THE INTERPRETER GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SAHARA	5 CAN THIS BE LOVE	6 XXX 2	7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 CAN THIS BE LOVE		2 XXX 2	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE INTERPRETER GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX XXX 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 FINDING NEVERLAND GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE WEDDING DATE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 GUESS WHO GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX XXX 2		2 CAN THIS BE LOVE	
	3 GUESS WHO	4 THE WEDDING DATE	5 THE INTERPRETER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 XXX 2	2 BE COOL	3 CAN THIS BE LOVE	4 FINDING NEVERLAND

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1. Samara (Ring 2)
2. Wedding Date
3. Sahara
4. Ring of Nibelungs

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00

5. The Jacket
6. The Interpreter
7. Guess Who

EVENTS! EVENTS!

MARKET! MARKET!

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Bayanihan Dance Troupe
April 28, 2005
Thursday, 6 pm
Activity Center

The Hip Hop Badminton Challenge
Final Round
April 30 - May 1, 2005
Saturday & Sunday
Activity Center

colors of summer
May 1, 2005, Sunday
Children's Party, 12nn to 4pm
Kiddie Fashion Show, 4pm

Sunday, 12nn - 5pm
A children's festival at the 3rd Level, Children's Zone

Boob-tube booboos

QUIZMASTER: Which were the countries that fought against each other during World War Two?

Contestant: US and Vietnam!

(Did World War Two really last that long?)

* * *

Quizmaster: Who was the first man on the moon?

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Contestant: Louis Armstrong!

(What a beautiful sight—Satchmo playing "Claire de Lune" on the moon!)

* * *

Host: What's the next recipe that you will demonstrate for us on the show today?

Guest chef: We will do a special *adobo* recipe. For the ingredients, we will splash them on the screen!

(Careful—*baka matalsikan kami*!)

* * *

Host: Are you still with (name of signer)?

Guest: No more.

Host: Why, what happened?

Guest: *Huwag na lang*. I don't like to talk anything which regarding him.

(*Sige na nga...*)

* * *

Host: What's our next explosive feature today?

Co-host: An interview with (name of star). *Aaminin na niya* for the first time *ang kanyang pagiging batang ama*!

(*Baka "binatang ama" and ibig mong sabihin?*)

* * *

Host: I hear you were sick last year, but now you've beautifully recovered?

Guest: Yes, last year, *meron akong* gall bladder, *pero natanggal*.

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: Did you love your new movie when you saw it at the premiere last night?

Guest: Oh, so much. After only a few minutes, tears started rolling in my eyes!

(Hey, that's quite a trick!)

* * *

Newscaster: And now, for the latest act of violence in Iraq: After a car bomb went off, at least 11 people were died.

(Uh, next news item, please?)

* * *

Host: What makes your movies successful at the box office?

Guest: I think, it's because I know the pulse of the people, my approach is not theoretical. I'm not an acadamian!

(That's—acadamiac!)

* * *

Newscaster: In show biz, (name of star) was accused of beating his wife, but he bellied claims that he was a wifebeater!

(Not "bellied," belied—that extra "l" makes a big difference.)

* * *

Newscaster: When was the last time you saw your child by (name of actress)?

Guest: I admit, a long time now—we have been strange for a very long time.

(You sound pretty strange right now!)

Feedback

FROM **Albert Almaden**, executive producer of Channel 2's "Kamao": "Thank you for the constructive comments you wrote about our show. It warms our hearts that the program we've worked so hard on has not gone unnoticed by a respected writer like yourself.

"The inevitable comparison with 'The Contender' was insightful. We have to agree that **Robin Padilla** was too 'over the top' compared to 'Contender' host **Sylvester Stallone**. But Robin's role was to be the drill sergeant of our boxing boot camp, so the 'toughness' factor was part of his repertoire.

"As for **Vina Morales**' performance, nothing in her previous experience had prepared her prior to our first show; she was watching her first boxing match and was literally stunned. It was just too real for her, but she would eventually adjust to that reality.

"While it is true that our boxers have difficulty expressing themselves in Tagalog, please understand that only one of them was born and raised in Manila, with the rest coming from non-Tagalog provinces. They will eventually learn the idiom. What they may lack in communication skills so far, they make up for with their gusto and brawn.

"Lastly, it was nice of you to say that the boxing action in 'Kamao' is at times better than that of our foreign counterpart. We show it in real time as the fight unfolds, so we can all bear witness to the skill, determination and heart of Filipino ring heroes chasing their dreams.

"We reiterate our admiration for your credibility and fairness that should be a model for our colleagues in entertainment journalism."

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1	THE INTERPRETER 12:05, 2:55, 5:45 8:35, 11:10 PG-13
2	XXX 2 PLEASE CALL FOR SCREENING TIME
3	GUESS WHO? 12:35, 3:10, 5:45 8:20, 10:50 PG-13
4	CAN THIS BE LOVE PLEASE CALL FOR SCREENING TIME

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 XXX 2 MTRCB: PG-13
2 THE INTERPRETER MTRCB. PG-13 10.50, 1.40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE Subject to MTRCB Rating
4 GUESS WHO MTRCB: PG-13 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50
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Star group of cinemas movie guide IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
Starmall EDSA-Shaw Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Paraiso
4 Can This Be Love
5 XXX 2
Kids Salon and Fashion Show Starmall Edsa Apr 30 Saturday 2nd Level Food Court, 4pm
Metropolis Alabang Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Ring of Nibelungs
2 Paraiso
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 XXX 2
6 Can This Be Love
Starmall Las Piñas Tel. No. 874.43.99
1 Sahara
2 Rental Reservation
Star Model Search (Screening) at Metropolis Alabang April 29-30 2pm

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

GUESS WHO PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:15	XXX 2:THE NEXT LEVEL PG13	THE INTERPRETER PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45,10:30
CANTHIS BE LOVE GP	RING OF THE NIBELUNGS PG13 12:15,2:45,5.15,7:45,10:20	XXX 2:THE NEXT LEVEL PG13

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the podium cinema
1. THE INTERPRETER 12:10 FS / 12:40 MF / 3:15 / 5:50 / 8:25 10:35 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 1:10 END
2. GUESS WHO 1:35 FS / 2:05 MF / 4:15 / 6:25 8:35 / 10:15 LFS / 10:45 LMF / 12:25 END
633-8978
sm megamall cinema 1
FINDING NEVERLAND 12.05 FS / 12.40 MF / 2:55 / 5:10 7:25 / 9:05 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 11:20 END
633-1901
sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: HIDE AND SEEK
CINEMA 3: THE PACIFIER 7:45 / 9:30 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:05 END
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METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 FINDING NEVERLAND
2 SAHARA
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 THE JACKET
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 SAMARA: RING 2
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 THE INTERPRETER
11 GUESS WHO
12 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city fairview
1 GUESS WHO
2 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 THE JACKET
6 SAHARA
7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
8 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
9 SAMARA: RING 2
10 FINDING NEVERLAND
11 THE PACIFIER
12 OK KA PARE KO

sm city north edsa
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 SAHARA
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 THE INTERPRETER
6 THE JACKET
7 GUESS WHO
8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

sm city manila
1 GUESS WHO
2 THE INTERPRETER
3 FINDING NEVERLAND
4 SAHARA
5 THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 OK KA PARE KO
8 SAMARA: RING 2
9 RING OF THE NIBELUNG
10 THE PACIFIER
11 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
12 THE JACKET

sm city sta. mesa
1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 GUESS WHO
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 OK KA, PARE
7 SAMARA: RING 2
8 SAHARA
9 THE WEDDING DATE
10 THE JACKET

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 THE JACKET
8 SAMARA: RING 2
9 SAHARA
10 GUESS WHO

sm city bicutan
1 SAHARA
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 GUESS WHO
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 GUESS WHO
2 SAMARA: RING 2
3 SAHARA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 BE COOL
4 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 THE PACIFIER

sm city baguio
1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 CURSED
3 THE PACIFIER
4 CLOSER

sm city batangas
1 BE COOL
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
4 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD

sm city dasmariñas
1 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 SAMARA: RING 2
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

sm city marilao
1 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city bacoor
1 THE WEDDING DATE
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
4 SAMARA: RING 2
5 SAHARA
6 GUESS WHO
7 THE PACIFIER
8 OK KA PARE KO

sm city lucena
1 CURSED
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 CLOSER
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 RESERVED
3 THE PACIFIER
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
5 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
6 SAMARA: RING 2
7 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
8 SAHARA

sm city iloilo
1 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD
2 RESERVED
3 BE COOL
4 THE PACIFIER
5 BOOGEYMAN
6 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
7 RESERVED
8 SAMARA: RING 2

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4 HOSTAGE
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 HIDE AND SEEK

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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There's 5 more of Mikey A

PILI, Camarines Sur—Congressman Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, a movie star, has introduced five fellow congressmen to show biz, to raise funds for livelihood projects.

Arroyo, who visited Camarines Sur last April 18, said he had invited Representatives Anthony Miranda, Gerry Espina, Bong Nograles, Mangondadato and Ogieng Mercado to do an action-comedy flick with the working title "Ang Buraot at Ang Pasaway."

Loosely translated, the title means "The Bum and The Troublemaker." Arroyo said this was "not yet final," and might be changed at the end of filming.

Arroyo, the President's son, said they recently shot some sequences in Pampanga for two days, with starlets Katrina Halili and Ana Leah Javier of the Viva Hot Babes.

The movie is being produced by Cine Suerte. Arroyo said it is guaranteed to bring out his colleagues' acting talents and, at the same time, generate funds to help the poor.

"However, show biz will never get in the way of our public service," Arroyo vowed.

He said shooting was being scheduled to coincide with non-session days at the Lower House.

Arroyo further explained that, with the production of the movie, the lawmakers have effectively helped generate jobs for stuntmen and bit players in the movie industry. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

GIAN Sotto, left, with Nerveline buddies, Boddjhie and Ace

Senator's son as rock star

Gian Sotto has his family's full support

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

FORMER Senator Tito Sotto's whole family turned up for the album launch on Friday of the rock band called Nerveline.

"Tito Sen," his wife Helen and their three daughters were quite obviously the biggest fans of the lead vocalist—Gian Sotto, the only boy in the brood.

Initial objection

Helen, queen of pop during her time, told INQUIRER Entertainment: "I raised my objection when Gian informed me that he wanted to form a rock band. I have always considered rock as an exercise in noise. I told him, *mag-artista na lang siya* (why not try acting?). But rock is his passion, so the least I could do was set a condition. I said, finish college first."

Gian did, finishing a course in Entrepreneurship and Management at the University of Asia and the Pacific in Pasig.

The proud mother said, "We intend to open a food business. Meanwhile, I have to keep my end of the bargain. Surprisingly, I am beginning to appreciate his music."

Tito Sen added: "I told him that the only input I could give was on the technical side. The rest is up to him. Gian is a very creative person, and creativity is something you either have or don't. He also happens to be a good guitarist—even better than myself."

The former senator was himself the leader of the popular group Tilt Down Men during the 1960s.

Sister Ciara was very happy for her *kuya*. At one point during the live performance, she approached him and wiped his perspiration. "Cutting a record is his biggest dream," she said. "I watched him work day and night on the songs, not knowing if they would be recorded or not. I admire his optimism and dedication."

Finding a company to produce the album wasn't easy, either. Gian sent demo tapes to nearly all the major music outfits and most of the replies were discouraging. It boiled down to one thing: the market for rock is limited.

And then the demo reached Ivory Music & Video. Years ago, when bands were all the rage, Ivory had the best bands on its roster. The rock group Wolfgang was among its top sellers. Needless to say, Ivory saw Nerveline's potential.

The two other members are Boddjhie on bass and Ace on drums. Nerveline's sound is influenced by the grunge bands of the '90s—mainly Pearl Jam, Soundgarden and Nirvana—as well as Black Sabbath, Pink Floyd and Jimi Hendrix.

Free hand

Gian said he is grateful that he was given a free creative hand, especially on the album contents. Of the 11 tracks that he composed, only one is in Tagalog and is titled "Basang Labi."

It is the carrier single, and tells about the cycle of life.

Only two years old, Nerveline has performed in rock festivals, including last year's "Summer Slam" and the Parental Advisory tour, where they were billed with other big names in Pinoy rock.

The debut album's title is "Anesthesia." It was produced by Angee Rozul. Photography and cover art work are by Gari Buenavista.

Restored 'Adarna' screening

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Film Institute will screen the 1941 Filipino film classic, "Ibong Adarna," on Thursday, 7 p.m.

Produced by LVN Pictures, written and directed by Vicente Salumbides under the technical supervision of Manuel Conde, the costume film tells of a mythical bird whose singing was the only hope to heal an ailing king.

The film stars prewar idols Mila del Sol and Fred Cortes, Leopoldo Salcedo, Ben Rubio, Ester Magalona and Deanna Prieto.

Just in time

One of only four surviving local prewar films, "Ibong Adarna" was restored by LVN and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Its delicate nitrate material fast deteriorating, the film's print was rescued just in time.

Shot predominantly in black and white, "Ibong Adarna" resorted to frame-by-frame coloring in the scenes showing the bird bursting into full plumage.

The screening, part of the institute's second anniversary program, will be held at Cine Adarna, now the name for the entire UP Film Complex. Call 926-3640.

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3 (DTS) SPANGLISH
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5 (DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER
6 (SDDS) PACIFIER
7 (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
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2 SAMARA (RING - 2)
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4 MAPUSOK
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4 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE
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2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 SPONGEBOB
4 PARAISO
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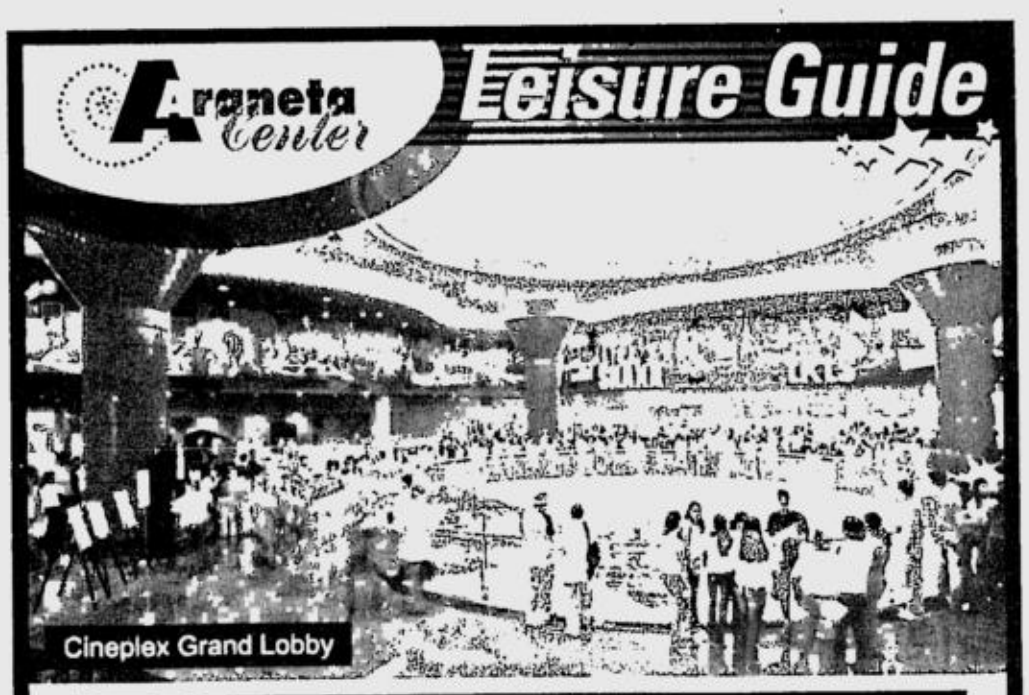

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4:45pm Red Bull vs. Fedex / 7.35pm Talk n' Text vs. Fedex
MOSSIMO BIKINI SUMMIT 2005
April 30, Saturday, 8pm
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 1
4.15 pm Alaska vs. Coke / 6.35pm Shell vs. Ginebra
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 4
4:45 pm Coke vs. Purefoods / 7:35pm Talk n' Text vs. Red Bull
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Ali Idol Singing Contest 4:30-6pm, April 29, 30 & May 1
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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

ABS-CBN exec on GMA 7 overtake: We saw it coming

KAPAMILYA summer caravan in Dagupan City PHOTO: ABS-CBN DAGUPAN

By Gobleth Moulic
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—"We saw it coming," an executive of ABS-CBN has said of rival network GMA 7's overtaking the Kapamilya network in Metro Manila.

Enrico Santos, ABS-CBN vice president for entertainment, on Sunday led a group of some 50 talents, the biggest single group of *artistas* to visit Northern Luzon so far this summer.

Latest ratings showed that Ch. 7 has eased Ch. 2 out of living rooms in the metropolis. How big a threat is this?

"I'm not looking at it as a threat, but as an impetus to improve," Santos told the INQUIRER on Sunday night after the two-hour Kapamilya Summer Caravan show at SM City Baguio. "I congratulate [GMA 7] for being number one in Mega Manila on some days. But [ABS-CBN] is still number one nationwide."

This development was not because Ch. 7 programs are superior, Santos pointed out, but because "we have weakened in other areas."

He said he and other ABS-CBN executives predicted this four years ago."

"In the United States... the leading TV network was unseated by [its rival]. It's a worldwide trend," he said. "But ABS-CBN dominated [ratings] for 17 years. GMA 7 beat us recently, for certain days. How long they will maintain this remains to be seen."

Santos revealed that his network has started reforms in production and technology. He said ABS-CBN's signal in some parts of the country is poor.

Their creative team continues to think up programs for viewers here and broad, Santos added.

He cited the "phenomenal success" of the boxing reality show "Kamao," and said ABS-CBN has also starting exporting its soap operas to Indonesia, Malaysia and South Africa.

Part of the efforts to boost ratings was to bring the stars closer to the people, Santos said.

Sunday's caravan consisted of stars of the network's top shows. They met fans in Tarlac, staged mini-concerts in Dagupan, and partied with students and workers here.

This weekend, the stars will go to Cebu, ABS-CBN's stronghold, Santos said. "We have to continue courting our viewers."

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OPENING TODAY

xXx 2 The Next Level

Directed by Lee Tamahori
Stars Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson, Willem Dafoe, Peter Strauss

SUMMARY: NSA Agent August Gibbons once again finds himself in need of an outsider. He and his new agent Darius Stone, codenamed "XXX," must track down a military splinter group conspiring to overthrow the US Government.

Since the movie opens April 29 worldwide, the only review on the Net was by someone named Riche Cline who wrote: "OK you don't expect a sequel to 2002's brainless 'XXX' to be an action masterwork, but this is so preposterous that it feels like an overblown spoof of the original. Basically it's 'Charlie's Angels' with testosterone. Bring Drew, Cameron and Lucy along and maybe it'd be watchable. Excessively violent, extremely noisy and exceedingly fiery (virtually everything explodes), this exhausting film exists only to exploit action movie cliches. But the film rockets along with an exaggerated energy that's actually quite hilarious. It's so over-the-top it's even more numbing than the first film."

Can This Be Love?

Directed by Jose Javier Reyes
Stars Hero Angeles, Sandara Park, Roderick Paulate, Eugene 'Simang' Domingo, Joross Gamboa, Roxanne Guinoo

SUMMARY: A touching love story of two people who fall in love although they are polar opposites. Ryan is a Nursing student and part-time typist. Daisy is a Korean exchange student who came to the Philippines to study English. Ryan types what he thinks is the worst term paper ever written titled, "What is Wrong With Filipinos?" The paper is full of grammatical errors, which makes his job a scourge. He swears he will forever hate the Korean who wrote it.

Ryan contacts a girl who's selling a cellphone and they become friends through texting. The friendship develops into something serious while the term paper turns into a pain in the a--. Of course, he discovers that his textmate and the term paper writer are one and the same.

Just goes to show how texting has damaged spelling and the English language.

Kidman weekend in the US

LOS ANGELES—Nicole Kidman and Sean Penn's "The Interpreter" translated into solid box-office as the United Nations thriller debuted with $22.8 million to top the weekend for Hollywood.

The weekend's other main debut, Ashton Kutcher and Amanda Peet's romantic comedy "A Lot Like Love," had a so-so opening of $7.7 million, coming in at No. 4, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Kung fu on

Expanding nationwide after two weeks in limited release, Stephen Chow's action comedy "Kung Fu Hustle" was No. 5 with $7.3 million, lifting its total domestic gross to just over $8 million.

Anthony Anderson's kidnapping comedy "King's Ransom," so bad it was not screened beforehand for critics, finished in 10th place with just $2.4 million.

Limited

In limited release, the documentary "Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room" opened strongly with $70,000 at three theaters. The film offers an inside portrait of the corporate scandal at the energy

KIDMAN/ A2-2

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Ja Rule: Gotta make some noise

And that's exactly what the gangsta rapper from New York did in Cubao

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

"LEMME get this straight now," Ja Rule said, a few songs into his live performance Saturday night at the Araneta Coliseum. "Rule number one in concert etiquette is... you gotta make some noise!!!"

There's no other rule than that, he laughed, as a crowd of mostly youthful hip-hop fans acceded and hollered.

Attendance to the gig was low, compared to a recent oldies concert by the Cascades at the same humongous venue. Yet a good part of the estimated 8,000 occupied seats was emptied as the audience, many standing out in their basketball jerseys and baggy jeans topped with "*semi-kalbo*" haircuts, rose to their feet, energized by dazzling lights and the massive, thumping beats provided by Ja Rule's DJ.

For all his I'm-a-thug-don't-mess-with-me-or-I'm-gonna-whip-your-ass stance, Ja (Jeff Atkins), the gravelly-voiced gangsta rapper from Queens, New York, seemed to have everyone, especially the ladies in the house, in the palm of his hands. Every word he uttered, particularly those punctuated by "motherf---s," was met by howls of approval.

"Manilaaa," he said coyly, "let's make some motherf----n' noise!"

Outlet

And what was all that noise about?

In a recent article in GQ magazine, music journalist Nik Cohn wrote that the ruckus rap music created was so attractive because it was an outlet through which anyone could say anything, as long as they had the balls and the beats to back it up.

In rap, Cohn said, there was a sense of the black world rising. There was fearlessness—a rage and fierce rush exuded by the best rappers in the early years. There was a downside to it, however, and we'd like to share some of Cohn's insightful comments:

"The best and worst thing about unleashing a form in which everyone has a voice is that 90 percent of humans, given the chance, talk absolute rubbish. No, make that 95 percent. And, in rap, that figure may well have been higher. Right from the start, it attracted the strange and the outright mad: ten thousand tongues of Babel, all blathering at once; windbags and sickos, verbal bomb-throwers, as well as the occasional prophet. But all of them (and this was the magic) were fantastically alive, and none were afraid to speak their own truths, however warped."

So now we have the likes of Ja, who affixed "Rule" to his name to stand for "Represents Unconditional Love's Existence," and is indeed unafraid to flaunt his way of seeing things.

"Pain is love," he proclaimed, moments after paying tribute to the late Tupac Shakur and other fallen black artists. The ironic significance was not lost when Ja mentioned Tupac in the same breath as the Notorious B.I.G. —two rap stars shot to death as a result of violence between hip-hop gangs in the East and West coasts of America.

Ja himself is drawn to violence, and this is best illustrated by the startling burst of gunshots his DJ played at various intervals during the Araneta show. But then again, this tendency to highlight rap's hard-core stuff was quickly doused when Ja's to the more palatable hits.

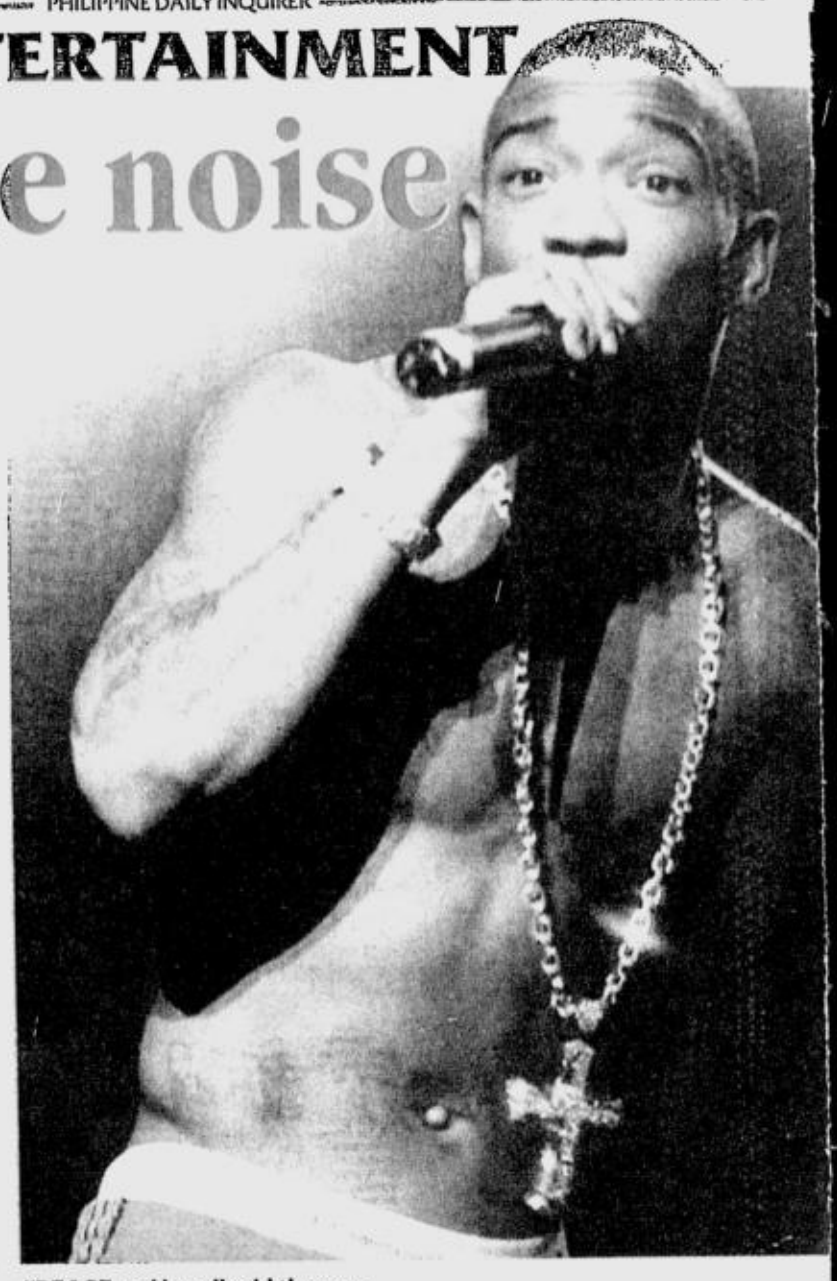
"I wonder who among the here have fat asses," he blur a way of introducing "T al"—his well-received love that featured Jennifer Lop the CD version. At that ins lot of women were already to sing J. Lo's part with ma gyrations. And by the time Ja ly took off his T-shirt to revea tooed, muscled physique, th were swooning. While at were amused to discover hip-hop concert was not a i for love-struck teenaged cou kiss and hug, while onst swaggering Ja shouted, "Mu

For show

We took it to mean as a ence to Murder Inc., Ja's label, but was nonetheless timidating thought, althou audience apparently with good humor.

For all intents and purpo Rule's act might just be show, but we wish he mean he said when he ended the saying, "Peace and love"— thing sadly wanting in culture these days.

A word on opening act Valley Crew and 7 Shots dom: we're not asking the g do an Andrew E or perh Francis M. But in the inte MTV jock Sarah Meier's p support local hip-hop arti think more people will only if they are able to re whatever it is these rappe harping on.



"PEACE and love," said the man.

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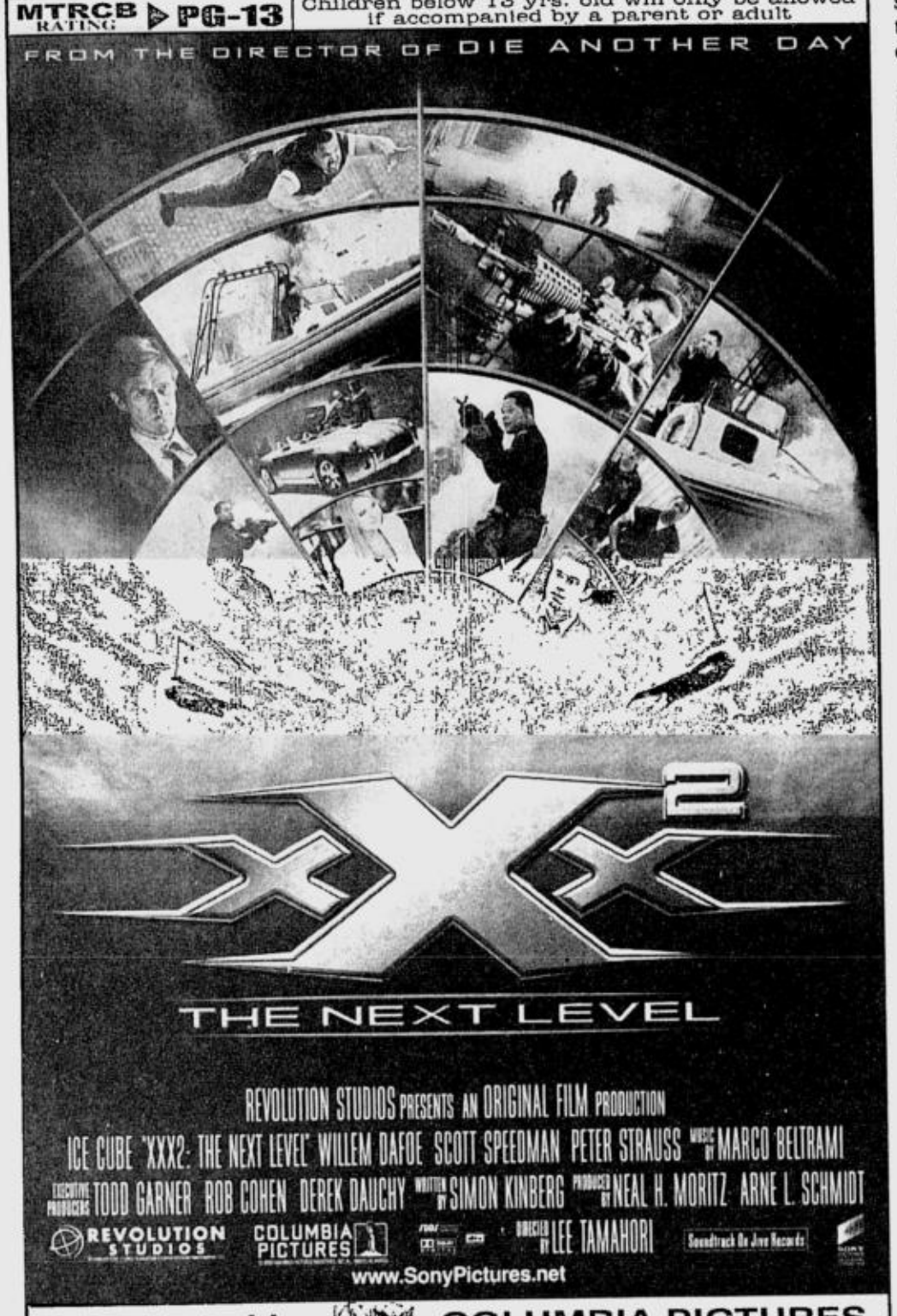
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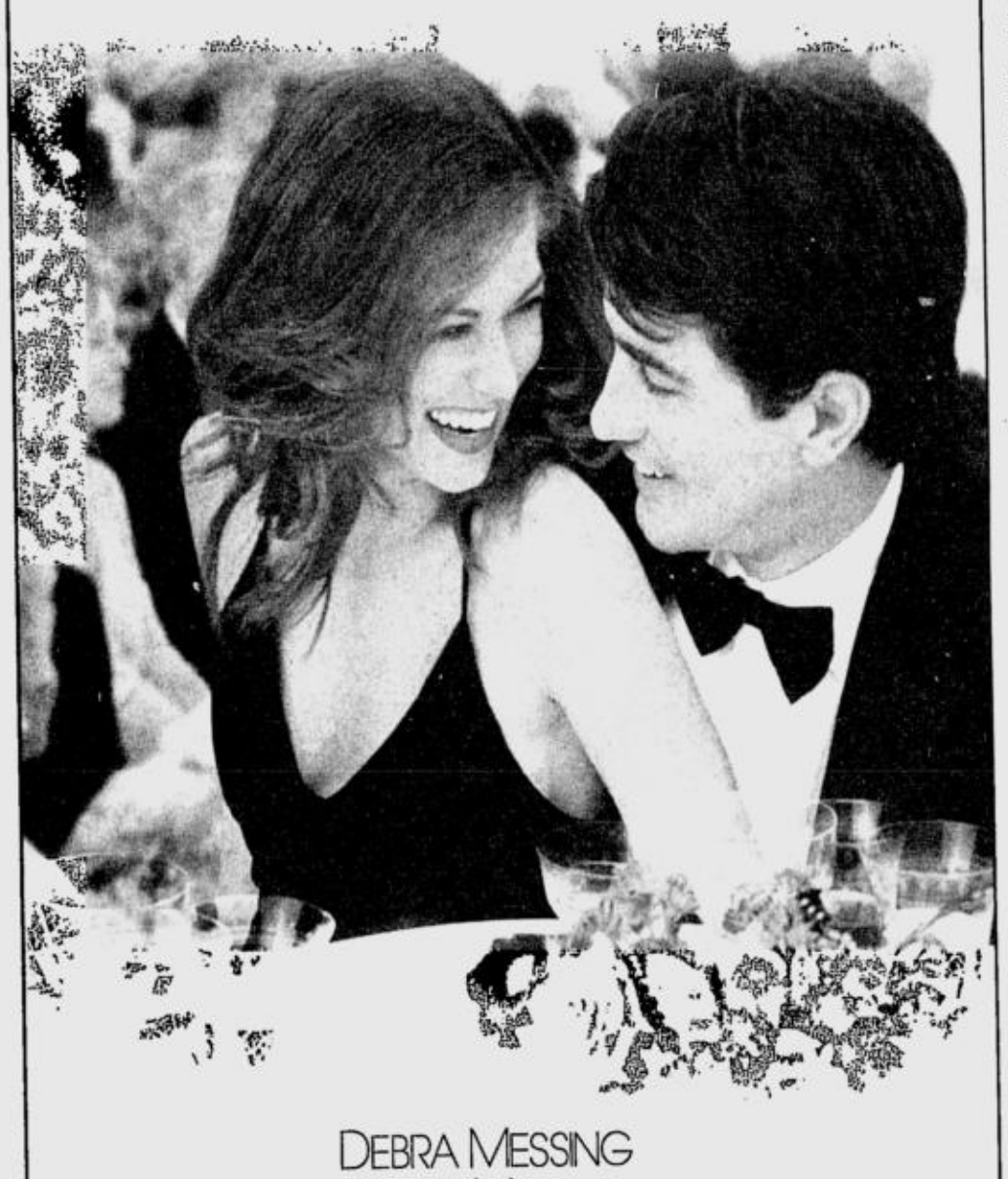
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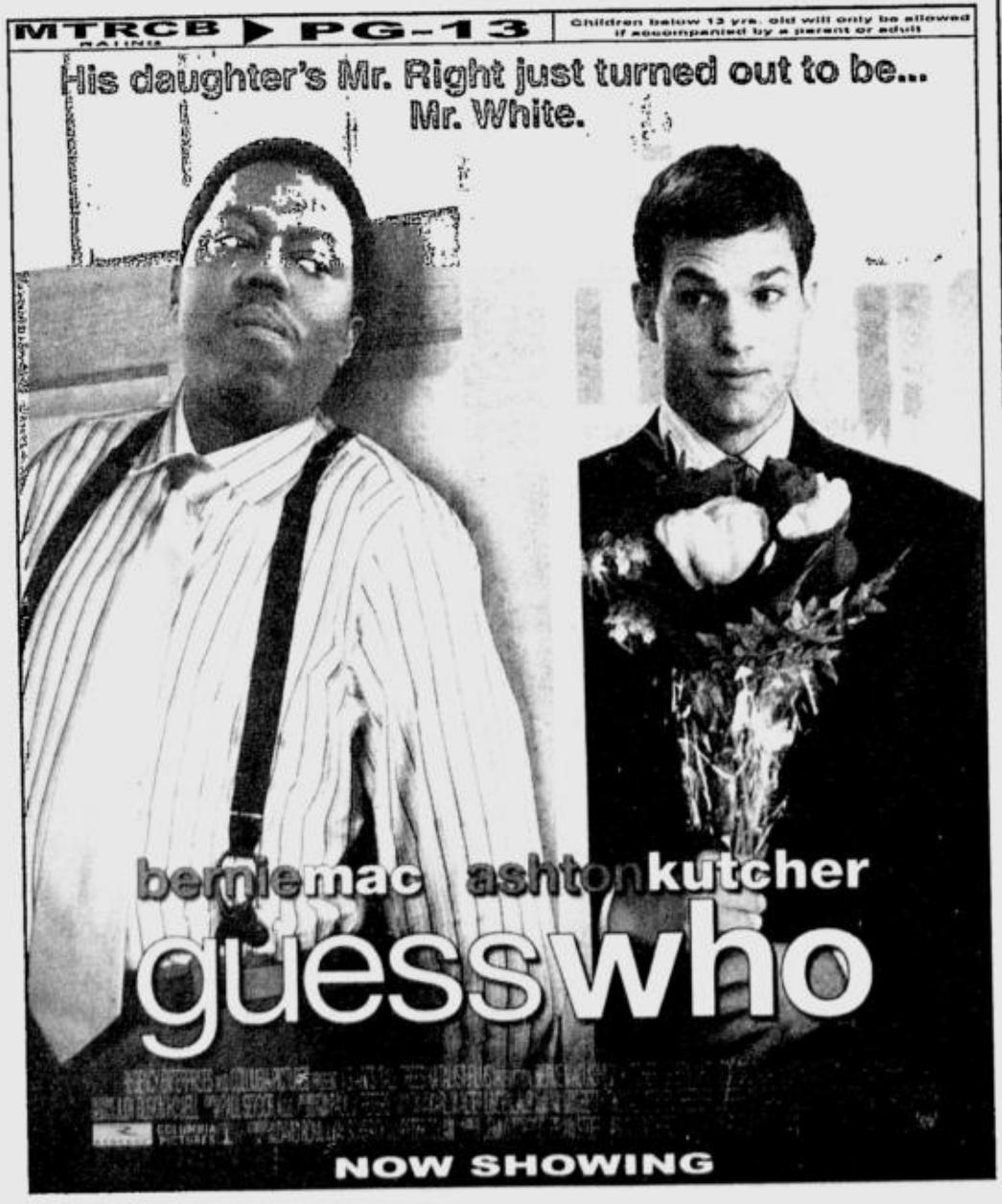
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guess who
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France's favorite funny heroes in live-action movie!
Asterix & Obelix VERSUS CAESAR
In this film, *Caesar* gives *Detritus* an ultimatum: find a way to conquer the Gauls or he'll find his way inside the stomach of the lions. *Detritus* comes up with a plan to kidnap *Getafix the Druid*, creator of the magic potion which enables the Gauls to be temporarily invincible. Meanwhile, the Romans' tax collection chest winds up in the village and con-man *Prolix* is out to trick them all. *Obelix* is in love with *Panacea* who loves someone else. A new magic potion is developed with "double" the punch. The Roman centurion X'mas Bonus once again reluctantly sends his soldiers to do battle with the Gauls (he knows he's bound to lose, anyway). Betrayals, battles, and funny escapades abound! And where is *Asterix* in all this? You'll just have to watch how everyone's favorite Gaul will save the day!
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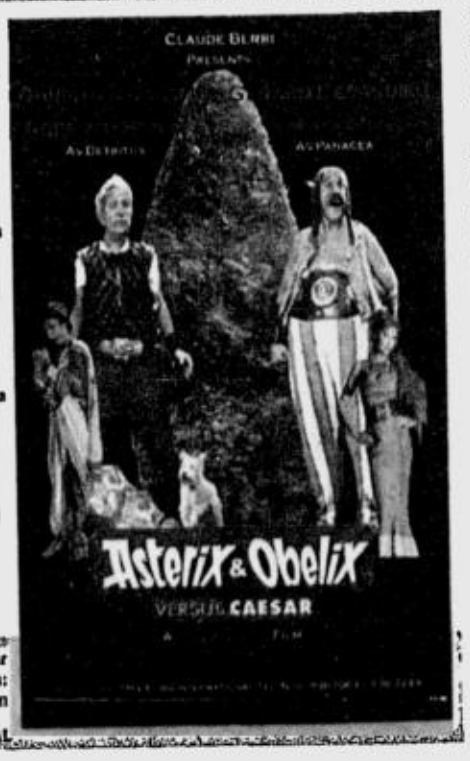
Asterix & Obelix VERSUS CAESAR

Kidman weekend ...

From page A2-1

company.

Overall business was dow the ninth-straight week, wi top 12 movies taking in million, off a fraction fro same weekend last year.

"The Interpreter," dir by Sydney Pollack, star man as a UN translator center of an assassinati after she overhears a threat against an African tor. Penn co-stars as a fe agent.

"A Lot Like Love," whic ceived mixed reviews, fell of distributor Disney's hope it would hit $10 million opening weekend.

Estimated ticket sales fo day through Sunday at American theaters, acco to Exhibitor Relations Co Final figures will be rele Monday.

1) "The Interpreter," million

2) "The Amityville H $14.2 million

3) "Sahara," $9 million

4) "A Lot Like Love," $ lion

5) "Kung Fu Hustle," $ lion

6) "Fever Pitch," $5.4 m

7) "Sin City," $3.7 million

8) "Guess Who," $3 mil

9) "Robots," $3.3 million

10) "King's Ransom," $ lion

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Last call for 'Love You'

By Remy Umerez
Contributor

"LOVE You, Hate You, Love You" a concept show starring theater couple Isay Alvarez and Robert Seña goes on its last run tomorrow at Merk's Bar Bestro, Greenbelt 3.

"It's fun combining songs and gags because my husband is a funny man in real life," Isay told INQUIRER Entertainment. "The concept came about when we performed at the birthday party of Tita Roni (Tapia) last January. We serenaded her with her favorite songs and Richard (Merk) suggested we do a full-blown show of it. He (Richard) wanted something different.

Not just singing. He wanted to infuse laughter and skits with a theme. Since we are husband and wife, we thought, why not poke fun on married life?"

The first part of the show consists of solo numbers culled from famous musicals.

Highlights include excepts from "Miss Saigon," in which the couple have appeared, "The Phantom of the Opera" and other Broadway hits.

The skits consist the second part, and duets make up the finale.

Robert and Isay are appearing in the forthcoming movie, "La Visa Loca," directed by Mark Meily for Unitel.

The beneficiary of tonight's "Love You, Hate You, Love You" is the All For Jesus Foundation.

ROBERT Seña and Isay Alvarez

SIDE A Band at Tavern on the Square

Tonight

"Folies de Mwah" at **Club Mwah**, 10:30 p.m. Mondays thru Thursdays. Call 535-7943.

Side A at the **Tavern on the Square** in Greenbelt 2 Makati.

Freestyle at **19 East Music Hall**. Call 837-6903.

Tomorrow

Pilita Corrales and **German Moreno** at "Love in April," a fund-raising concert for street children at the **Music Museum**, 8 p.m. Call 825-9020.

Silkat Dusit Hotel Nikko, Thursdays.

Fat 4 with **Freshmen** band at **Ratsky Morato**.

Nyoy Volante w/ Mannos at **Suburbia** in Malate.

John Y Cash and The Jukeboxat Funnside, Timog Ave., QC.

April 29

Lito Camo takes center stage in "Lagi na Lang Kayo... Ako Naman!" at the **Music Museum**, 8:30 p.m. Call 891-9999.

MONIQUE Wilson

Bedazzled II at **Club Mwah!** every Friday and Saturday, 10:30 p.m. Call 535-7943.

Rockin' Revival at **Funnside**, Timog Ave., Q.C.

Acoustic Jive at **Merk's**.

Rachelle Ann Go in concert at **Aliw Theater** with **Mark Bautista**, **Christian Bautista**, **Jay-R** and **Ogie Alcasid** as special guests; 8 p.m. Call 911-5555.

April 30

Monique Wilson celebrates 25 years in theater with an anniversary concert at the **Music Museum**. Call 896-6695.

Southborder and **Silk** in the concert and fashion show, "Heat Wave" at the **Krua Thai Parking Lot**, Macapagal Ave. corner Edsa Extension, Pasay City; 7:30 p.m.

Kyla at the **Quezon Convention Center** in Lucena, Quezon

"**Spettacolo Pirotecnico**," light and fireworks show at **Enchanted Kingdom**, 9 p.m.

Christine Barangan and **Gil Claridades** at the Grand Matador and GSM Blue Party, **Sulo Hotel**, Diliman, Quezon City. Call 924-5051.

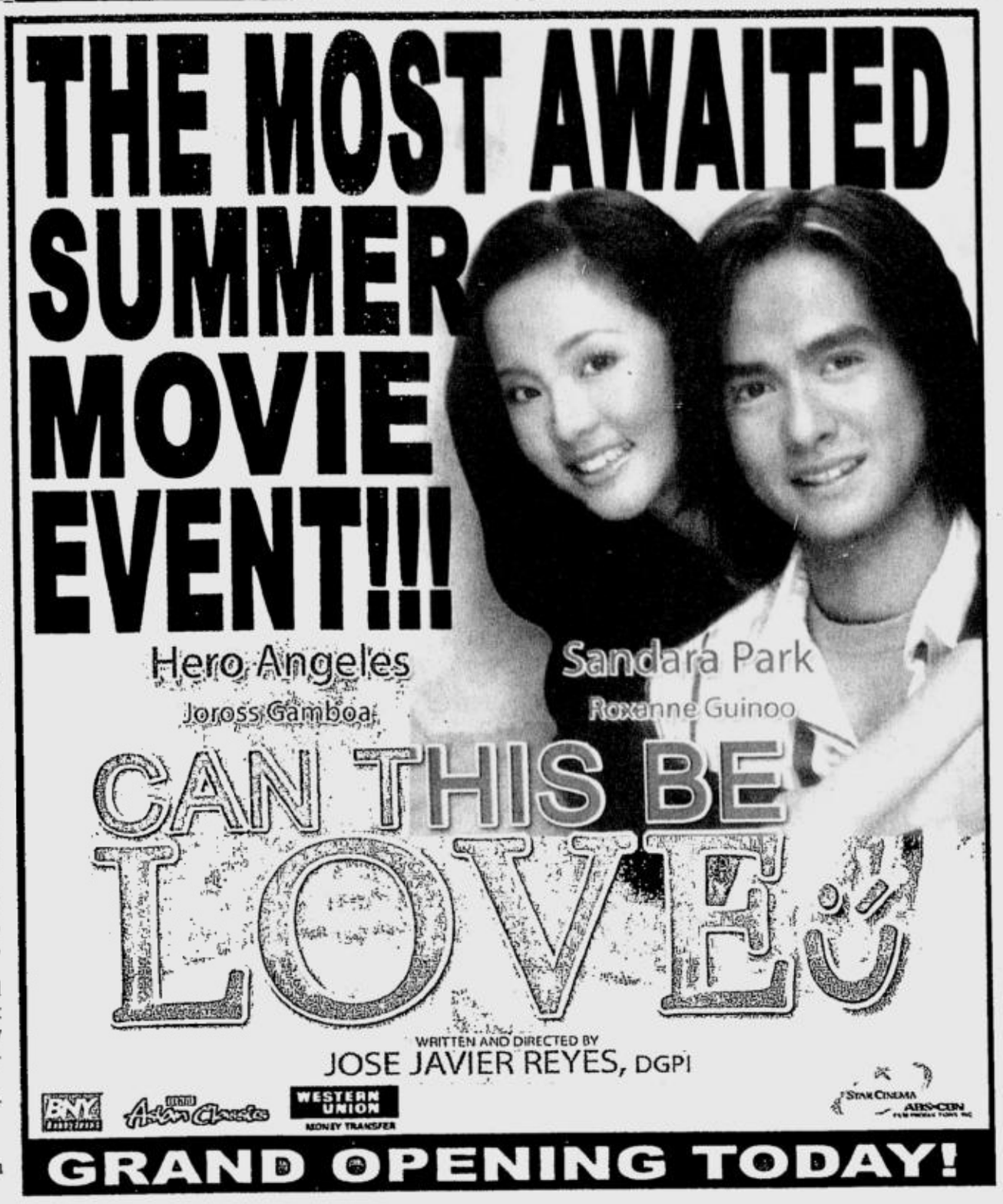
Kearney Street at Fiesta San Miguel, **Dusit Hotel Nikko**, Saturdays

Prime Council and **Freestyle** at **Club Paraw**, Boracay for Winston in Concert series.

Bedazzled II at **Club Mwah!** Call 535-7943.

Faith Cuneta at SM Sucat

Wiseguys at the **Tavern on the Square** in Greenbelt 2 Makati.



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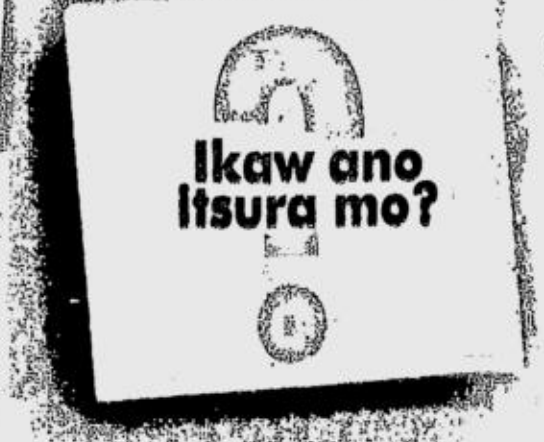
1. suspicious



9. "Ows, stop kidding me anymore"

8. over-confident

2. deadma lang

10 expressions of a new millionaire, what's yours?

7. nakakalokah

3. heaven

4. "I can't believe it anymore"

5. shocked

6. tuwa to the max

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Imports continue to slow down

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S imports fell 4.8 percent year-on-year in February to $2.85 billion as demand for electronics continued the slowdown felt in January, the National Statistics Office yesterday reported.

The NSO said electronics imports, which accounted for 44.4 percent of the total import bill for the month, fell 15.4 percent to $1.26 billion.

The February imports brought the two-month imports figure to $5.96 billion, or 3.4 percent lower than the year-ago level.

The slowdown in imports during the first two months led to a trade surplus of $302 million, a reversing the $330-million deficit during the same period last year. Exports for the first two months of the year stood at $6.26 billion.

On a month-on-month basis, February merchandise imports also declined by 8.4 percent from $3.11 billion in January. Electronics imports also fell on a month-on-month basis by 4.5 percent from $1.32 billion.

But economists said the two-month decline in imports could not yet indicate a negative outlook on sales and exports by local electronics companies. A few more months of consecutive decline in imports, however, could raise the alarm bells that the electronics sector could be headed for a downturn, they said.

Roberto De Vera, economics director of the University of Asia and the Pacific, said a two-month decline could not yet spell out a trend, but he said local firms should monitor the spending of foreign companies, especially those in the United States, for information technology (IT) products.

"The ones who buy our (electronic) chips are foreign companies in IT. If firms are becoming conservative by keeping their computers longer, then there may be a slowdown. This is what needs to be looked at," he said in an interview.

De Vera said that since the Philippines depended much on electronics for its export earnings, electronics firms should further diversify into other products aside from semiconductors. He said it would benefit electronics firms if they would produce more electronics products used in telecommunication.

"Electronics firms may want to diversify to cater to call centers so that they are able to ride (the boom in this sector), if indeed there is a slowdown in semiconductor," he said.

Jonathan Ravelas, economist and market strategist at Banco de Oro Universal Bank, said that high oil prices were partly to blame for the weakness in global demand for electronics. "But

IMPORTS/B4

CAP disputes findings of oversight body

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TROUBLED pre-need giant College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. has projected that P15.63 billion worth of education plans will mature starting this year until 2011, based on a report given by the company to the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) oversight committee.

SEC Chair Fe Barin said the Commission en Banc has yet to deliberate on the oversight committee's report, which recommends eight urgent measures to help preserve CAP's assets. *(See story in INQUIRER, April 26, 2005, page B1.)*

She also said there had been no update on CAP's new investor, Zurich-based International Global Capital Holdings AG, which was supposed to infuse $15 million to 25 million into CAP.

Based on CAP's presentation to the SEC, it said that plan benefits would mature as follows: P2.46 billion in 2005, P2.57 in 2006, P2.5 bilion in 2007, P2.36 billion in 2008, P2.09 billion in 2009, P1.92 bilion in 2010 and P1.72 billion in 2011.

Of the total, CAP said it had set aside funds to fully cover requirements this year and partially the P2.57 billion in maturing plans in 2006.

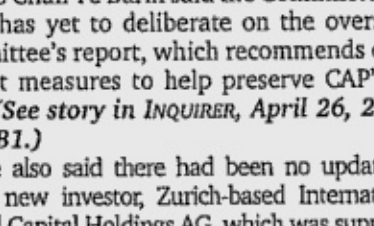
From 2004 to 2011, CAP's total projected liabilities stood at P17.92 billion. CAP paid a total of P2.56 billion in plans last year, exceeding its projected P2.3 billion.

CAP/B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



MARCH APRIL

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱54.35 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 26, 2005

¥105.90 = $1

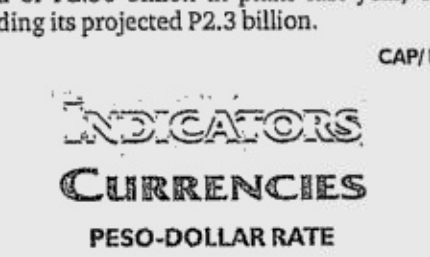
As of 5 p.m., April 26, 2005

GOLD: $435.00-435.50

per ounce Hong Kong, April 26, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B10)

Shares end 0.1% lower

SHARES ended slightly lower yesterday as bargain-hunting in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and SM Prime helped trim losses from heavyweights Ayala Land and Petron, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange index finished down 2.42 points, or 0.1 percent, at 1,858.14, following Monday's 0.4-percent loss.

The latest trade data released by the government before the market opened yesterday may have also contributed to the bearish market tone, traders said.

"The trade numbers were disappointing," said First Grade Holdings Managing Director Astro del Castillo. AP

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OVERSUBSCRIBED

Market drives down 7-year T-bond rate to 11.5%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COST of the government's seven-year borrowing dropped to 11.5 percent yesterday, as the local credit market was still awash with too much cash.

The new coupon rate for the seven-year Treasury bond was 50 basis points lower than the coupon rate of 12 percent during the debt instrument's original issuance in July last year.

Also, the new rate was 130.6 basis points lower than the 12.806 percent recorded during its re-issuance last September.

"The market has already priced in everything, that is why the rates are moving either sideways or downward," Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola said in a briefing after yesterday's auction.

Mendiola explained that investors in government securities have already factored in events that could spark an upward movement in rates for T-bonds and Treasury bills, such as an accelerated inflation.

This was why the rates for the government securities are already on the downtrend, he said.

The appetite of the market for the seven-year T-bond was strong, as tenders reached P8.44 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P4.5 billion.

The Bureau of Treasury's auction committee raised its entire borrowing schedule of P4.5 billion, thus rejecting P3.94 billion worth of bids.

"The rate was still also driven by excess liquidity in the market," Mendiola said

He added that the Treasury was not inclined to open a tap facility at this time despite the huge appetite for the seven-year T-bond.

According to Mendiola, there is no need for the government to borrow more than what had been programmed because its cash position remains healthy.

A tap facility is where investors whose bids were rejected in the regular auction can still buy government securities over the counter.

The Treasury opens this facility if there is an extraordinarily huge demand for a government security, and if the government is in need of more cash.

The Treasury official said he expected rates to stabilize in the near term as the T-bond and T-bill market—composed mainly of banks and insurance companies—have reacted favorably on the positive developments in the fiscal front.

He cited the P63.5-billion budget deficit for the first quarter, which was well within the government's official target of P77.8 billion.

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NPC – SPUG

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the support of its appointed transaction advisor, the International Finance Corporation, is inviting private sector participation through long-term concession agreements, in electricity generation in the off-grid areas of the Philippines. As a first step, it has identified three off-grid areas, namely **Marinduque**, **Tablas** and **Romblon**, with a combined capacity of 15 MW, as pilots to conduct a competitive selection process to be held in June, 2005.

Interested parties are requested to submit a formal Expression of Interest, including a brief profile of their Company, to be received at the address below along with a registration fee of Php5,000 made payable to the National PowerCorporation. Once registered, they will be given an information memorandum and other documents relating to the program's investment opportunity. Registration starts on April 27, 2005.

Sanjay Grewal
Program Manager
International Finance Corporation
11th Floor, Tower One
Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave.
Makati City, Philippines
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RP strategic paradigm on China and Taiwan

By Jose P. Leviste Jr.
Chairman, Philippine Business Leaders Forum, Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Corporate Network

(Last of two parts)

THE MANILA visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao is significant in the sense that it will highlight the 30 years of Philippines-China diplomatic relations, which became possible when the Philippines agreed to honor the "One-China" policy.

At present, China has a consulate in Cebu City apart from its embassy in Manila, while the Philippines has consulates in Xiamen, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Shanghai, outside its Beijing embassy.

It was on June 9, 1975 when diplomatic relations between the two countries actually started, following the signing of a joint communiqué that recognizes that there is only one China, of which Taiwan is an integral part.

A part of the agreement is that China would respect the internal affairs of the Philippines and would not support the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The signing of the joint communiqué actually came four years after the United Nations had recognized Beijing as the sole representative of China.

Taiwan, which was ruled by the nationalist Chinese after being ousted from mainland China in 1949, represented China in the UN until 1971.

Taipei renounces claim

It was only in 1994 when Taipei renounced its claim to represent all of China, and limited its representation to Taiwan itself.

The UN Resolution 2758 of 1971 granted China a UN seat and recognized the People's Republic of China (PROC) as the sole legitimate representative of China.

Now, China claims that the UN resolution is actually the UN's way of accepting that Taiwan is a part of China—something that the Taiwanese government vehemently denies.

Taiwan, a 36,000-square-kilometer island that is home to more than 23 million people, takes relief in the fact that it has secured the commitment of the US to come to its aid in case of a military incursion by China.

Under the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8), the US diplomatic relations with China was based on the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means. The law also provides explicit guarantees that the US will make available defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

Self defense

China had no problem with the Philippines maintaining trade relations with Taiwan, until October 1989 when it was reported that then Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus visited Taiwan.

Former President Corazon Aquino had to reaffirm the Philippines' adherence to the "One-China" policy to appease the government in Beijing.

While the Philippines adhered to the "One-China" policy most of the time, Philippine-China relations suffered another hitch six years later in 1995 when there were near skirmishes between Chinese naval ships and Philippine patrol boats at the contested Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. The island chain is also claimed in part by Taiwan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia.

Tension also broke out in the Scarborough Shoal near Pangasinan when Chinese ships were sighted near the area.

Tension

Both sides have since agreed to resolve the territorial disputes through friendly dialogues. In November 1996, former Presidents Jiang Zemin of China and Fidel Ramos of the Philippines vowed to seek joint development of the disputed areas of South China Sea while shelving differences.

The joint development was anchored on the areas of fishery cooperation, ocean environmental protection and confidence building mechanisms.

An important development is that, recently, national oil companies from both countries signed the Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking on Certain Areas in the South China Sea with Vietnam.

Flare-up

During the visit of President Hu Jintao, it is important for the Philippines to focus the dialogue on economic cooperation and stray away from sensitive political issues such as Taiwan.

The flare-up of anti-Japanese sentiments in China, which Tokyo claimed was tolerated and even encouraged by the Chinese government, is actually being linked to Beijing's growing paranoia over a Washington-Tokyo anti-Beijing alliance.

Japan has recently voiced its support for the US to come to the aid of Taiwan, in case of an outbreak of hostilities across the Taiwan Straits. Chinese officials denounced Japan's latest move as a reaction over China's surging economy and increasing economic and political role not only in Asia, but also in the world.

Australia, which has been positioning its armed forces for rescue operations and anti-terrorist campaigns in Southeast Asia, is an ally of the US in its campaign to root out terrorism in Asia. It is also watching the situation closely as Prime Minister John Howard just visited Beijing and Tokyo last week.

Australia

Australia is very interested in multilateral negotiations concerning the future shape of Asia's economic and political architecture, because the Australian economy itself has been getting a boost from China's voracious demand for its commodities. Australia's exports to China have quadrupled over the past decade.

Taking note of the fact that the current state of relations across the Taiwan Straits would be a danger to strategic stability in Asia and the Pacific, Australia is concerned about moves toward Taiwan independence and calls for restraint in the military buildup across the Taiwan Straits.

Australia's economy, like the Philippine economy, would suffer from a military action in the region.

On its part, the Philippines' position is partly dictated by its political and historical ties with the United States, where some 2 million Filipino immigrants hope that their native country will remain loyal to their new motherland.

Treat

Filipino immigrants in the US accounted for more than half of the US$8.5 billion remitted by overseas Filipinos to the Philippines in 2005. The Philippine position is, of course, now greatly influenced by its increasing economic relations with China, which helped boost its economy when exports to the US and Japan dived in 2001.

Further analysis of the situation reveals that, despite the concern Taiwan, Japan, the US and its allies have against the rising political status of China in Asia, they are the largest investors in, and trading partners of, China.

The economic reality of China's foreign policy has grown beyond the control of any political entity at this point, and even a strong threat of invasion of Taiwan does not discourage Taiwanese investors from pouring in more money into the mainland.

Given these realities, the Philippines should not miss out on the great opportunity that a rapidly growing China offers. Government data show that bilateral trade between the Philippines and China grew tenfold from only US$459 million in 1994 to US$5.185 billion in 2004 and there are indicators that these would continue to grow as the Chinese economy gathers steam and strength toward becoming the world's largest economy.

It would be in the Philippines strategic interest therefore, that peace and stability reign over the Taiwan Straits, regardless of the new Chinese Anti-Seccession Law and the Taiwanese desire to declare independence.

We have no other option except to maintain the uneasy status quo between both our Chinese neighbors.

What they don't still teach you at AIM

THE ASIAN Institute of Management is confounded by the most ticklish labor relations case study the premier business school has come across so far—its own. Classes are scheduled to open next week, but the issue of the academic qualifications of the new dean, Victoria Licuanan, has not been satisfactorily resolved, although the restive faculty, it seems, is willing for the moment to sweep the issue under the rug.

Except for the thesis, Licuanan finished all the academic requirements for a PhD degree in economics from Harvard. And since Harvard does not offer a master's degree in economics, a doctoral degree from the same school would be needed to meet not only AIM's, but also the government's, minimum qualification for the deanship, a master's degree.

According to the grapevine, AIM surmounted the legal hurdle after it had obtained an opinion from a Harvard professor saying, in effect, that Licuanan for all intents and purposes may be considered to have earned the doctoral degree. The problem is, it is not for an overseas savant, but for the local authorities, specifically the Commission on Higher Education, that should pass judgment on the issue.

But, so far, except for water cooler discussions, nobody has formally brought up the question before the regulatory agency. It helps that Licuanan rose from the faculty ranks, and that she became the compromise candidate after the AIM faculty revolted against the appointment of an outsider, former Labor Secretary Nieves Confesor, as the first female dean of the region's first business school.

The Confesor episode, plus the continued hiring of outsiders by AIM president Roberto de Ocampo to lecture in AIM at higher, dollar-denominated rates, was what apparently triggered what should have been contained as creative tension within the academe to transmogrify into a management-labor row, with the agitated AIM faculty finally organizing themselves into a union to protect their ranks. The first management-union test is expected next week, when the issue of academic load, and how Licuanan farms out the assignments, should come to a head.

Pacific clueless

FORMER Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel C. Singson is sounding more like a lawyer these days whenever asked about the Pacific Plans disaster.

Singson happens to be the chair of Great Pacific Life, the Yuchengco insurance conglomerate that included Pacific Plans as subsidiary. In addition to being the chair, the former central banker was the head of the Grepalife investment committee, until, apparently seeing the handwriting on the wall, he gave up the position over two years ago in favor of Grepalife director, former Insurance Commissioner Adelita Vergel de Dios.

If you believe the grapevine, Vergel de Dios herself found about the Pacific Plans' application for receivership only in the newspapers; Singson himself was in China when the news broke out. If this story is correct, Vergel de Dios also apparently thought, like the uninformed public, that Pacific Plans was still a Yuchengco company.

Incidentally, before Grepalife spun off Pacific Plans, the pre-need company was for a long-time ran by Alfredo Antonio (president) and Benigno Zialcita III (executive vice president). Antonio and Zialcita have since been promoted as administrator and deputy administrator, respectively, of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, where the tandem hopefully would have better luck in financial management.

Money-go-round

• SM Prime Holdings officially joined the blue chips—a favorite of fund managers, widows, and orphans—after the mall developer announced the other day that it would start declaring cash dividends annually, beginning with last year's earnings, equivalent to 50 percent of prior year's net earnings. This year's dividend is equivalent to more than P2.3 billion, over half of which would incidentally accrue to various Sy holding companies. No wonder SM Prime president Hans Sy is now considering replacing the company-issued, aging Nissan Patrol SUV with an Audi S6 as his daily driver.

• THE GERMAN principals of TUV Philippines, the leading ISO certification and inspection company, are grumbling about National Transmission Corp. having allegedly bent the bidding rules and allowing the US competition, Sinclair Knight Merz, to submit a financial bid after SKM failed to first fill in the technical/local partner portion of the bid documents. In so doing, SKM was able to submit a bid lower than TUV's.

The winner will get to certify the technical fitness of the multibillion-peso worth of transmission grid that Transco will later auction.

Heard through the grapevine

THE BOARDROOM squabble between the Japanese and Filipino partners of Daikin-Alenaire is getting physical, with the Japanese principals now being threatened with deportation over the technical smuggling of Daikin air conditioning units into the country.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtds.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Napocor taps 3 banks for P5-B bond float

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE CASH-STRAPPED National Power Corp. (Napocor) has tapped three banks for its proposed P5-billion bond offering in May this year.

Deutsche Bank, First Metro Investment Corp., and state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines were appointed as joint issue managers for the issue, FMIC said in a statement.

Napocor plans to issue five- and seven-year fixed-rate "Power Bonds" in May, its second peso-denominated offering after its zero-coupon issue in 2004.

Proceeds from the proposed "Power Bonds" will be used for debt servicing and Napocor's general funding requirements.

The bond float may be increased to a maximum of P7 billion in case of an oversubscription.

Interest will be payable quarterly in arrears, with the principal to be paid in full upon maturity. The target issue date is on May 11.

The coupon rate will be determined through a Dutch auction to be conducted by the Inter-Agency Auction Committee through the the Bureau of Treasury (BTr).

The Department of Finance had already given its blessing to the bond float, which will be guaranteed by the national government.

The national government, through the DOF, had been borrowing on behalf of the state-owned power firm as the credit market was seen charging higher interest rates if Napocor borrowed on its own.

CAP disputes . . .

From page B1

CAP said maturing plans for 2007 until 2011 would be covered by new capital of $12.5 million from International Global Capital Holdings and P6.45 billion in assets, which could be developed and made to grow.

CAP first vice president Bobby Café said the present trust fund assets would not be stagnant, adding that the company was in constant communication with the SEC regarding steps to address concerns on capitalization and liquidity.

"In the April 14, 2005, meeting with the Commission, it was agreed that CAP should first be given a copy of the Oversight Committee's Report so that it can validate the data and basis for the recommendations and therefore avoid the errors of the past before the Commission puts this on the agenda. Up to now, CAP still has to receive its copy," Café said.

He said that in the previous SEC oversight committee reports there "were discrepancies that could have been corrected."

"Some recommendations were based on inadequate, if not inaccurate, information," Café said.

"There is an SEC comptroller for CAP, Ms. Merle Joy Pascual, who also sits as chair of the oversight committee. She never discussed any irregularities, if there were, so that if changes need be done, they could have been made in the earliest possible time," he said.

Café said CAP has already prepared for the incoming school year so that there was no need for the SEC to "formulate remedial actions."

CAP said it had increased its capitalization from P300 million to P8 billion and that two investors have submitted documents for the approval of the SEC on their combined contribution of P6.5 billion in various pieces of property.

It also stressed that it has totally stopped selling plans.

"The report speaks of 'possible' fraudulent activities. With their SEC comptroller for CAP, a SEC auditor plus the oversight committee, they could have already produced the evidence in the seven months since August of 2004 when the dealer's license was suspended," Café said.

CAP also denied that it has not deposited a portion of its collections to the trust fund.

Bank of Commerce raising P1.2B in tier-2 capital

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANK of Commerce is raising at least P1.2 billion in tier-2 capital for its medium-term expansion after recently unloading P1.6 billion worth of bad assets to a unit of US investment bank Lehman Brothers.

BOC president Raul de Mesa signed last April 5 the sale of its non-performing loans to Philippine Investment One using the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework.

This reduced the bank's NPL ratio to 8.1 percent of total loans against the industry average of 12.5 percent for commercial banks.

The SPV Law intends to help banks get rid of their NPAs by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets. It waived the documentary stamp tax, the capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value-added tax) and likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

After the sale of these NPLs, De Mesa said the next step was to raise tier-2 capital to stimulate growth and profitability.

Coupled with the recent SPV exercise, the tier-2 offering is seen to boost BOC's capital adequacy ratio to 16 percent from 14 percent at end-February.

The bank is keen on a peso-denominated issuance to avoid foreign exchange risks especially in view of recent credit-rating downgrades by international rating agencies.

De Mesa said BOC would be able to finalize the plans for its tier-2 offering by next week.

BOC, the banking arm of businessman Antonio Cojuangco, registered a net income after tax before provisions of P708.3 million last year compared to P825.67 million in 2003.

Its net interest income went up to P1.7 billion from P1.2 billion in the same period last year. Its deposits continued to expand, breaking the P41.5-billion mark, up from P37.3 billion a year ago.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 26, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	2,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	26	26	26	26	397,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48	48.5	47.5	48.5	460,900
China Banking Corp.	650	650	650	650	2,200
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	500,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	47	46.5	47	16,800
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	310,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31	31.5	317,000
Philippine National Bank	30.5	31	30.5	31	26,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	4,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	14,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	280	280	280	280	20
Manulife Financial Corp.	2430	2430	2430	2430	310
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1610	1615	1610	1615	410
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14	14.75	14	14.75	24,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	907,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	835	830	835	2,000
Ipeople Inc.	4	4.05	4	4	216,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.044	0.044	0.043	0.043	1,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	1,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.1	3.15	965,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1340	1360	1340	1355	81,910
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	250,000
Philweb Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	12,600
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23	23	23	433,300
Manila Water Co., Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	1,483,000
Petron Corp.	3.45	3.5	3.35	3.35	1,982,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	99,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	90,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.9	7	6.9	7	728,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.8	2.85	2,973,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.78	0.78	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	447,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.25	3.25	116,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	195,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	28	28.5	216,200
RFM Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	350,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	57.5	84,600
San Miguel Corp. B	83	83	82	83	120,800
Universal Robina Corp.	12.25	12.25	12	12.25	190,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	30,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	3,533,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.4	4.45	4.4	4.45	79,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.96	1.98	1.96	1.96	370,000
APC Group Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	510,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.007	80,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	30,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	1,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	880,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.02	1	1	6,880,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	570,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	590,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	2,600,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	380,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.1	2.9	2.95	4,714,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.1	1.1	210,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.9	8.9	8.8	8.8	117,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	43.5	43	43.5	398,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.0925	0.0925	0.09	0.09	600,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	300,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	53,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	6,658,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.4	0.4	39,550,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	20,000
SM Investments Corp.	245	247	246	247	358,570
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	23,380,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,160,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	30,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	210,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	50,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	1,570,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.12	1.14	3,010,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	730,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.5	1.54	317,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	12,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	1,770,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	260,800
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	3,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.5	7.6	8,536,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.82	0.84	0.82	0.84	360,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,810,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	1,270,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	720,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	220,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.225	0.225	0.21	0.21	670,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.62	1.62	85,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.7	7.4	7.5	6,364,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.8	4.85	4.8	4.85	115,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.2	9	8.2	9	146,000
Benguet Corp. B	26	27.5	26	27.5	2,300
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	-	-	-	-	-
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	2,780,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.36	0.37	0.35	0.36	10,180,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	72,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	147,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	7,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	600,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.18	1.18	1.14	1.14	569,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	37.5	37.5	36.5	36.5	539,100
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	12,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	300,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	180,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	3,900,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	71,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	1,900,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.34	0.38	0.34	0.38	300,000

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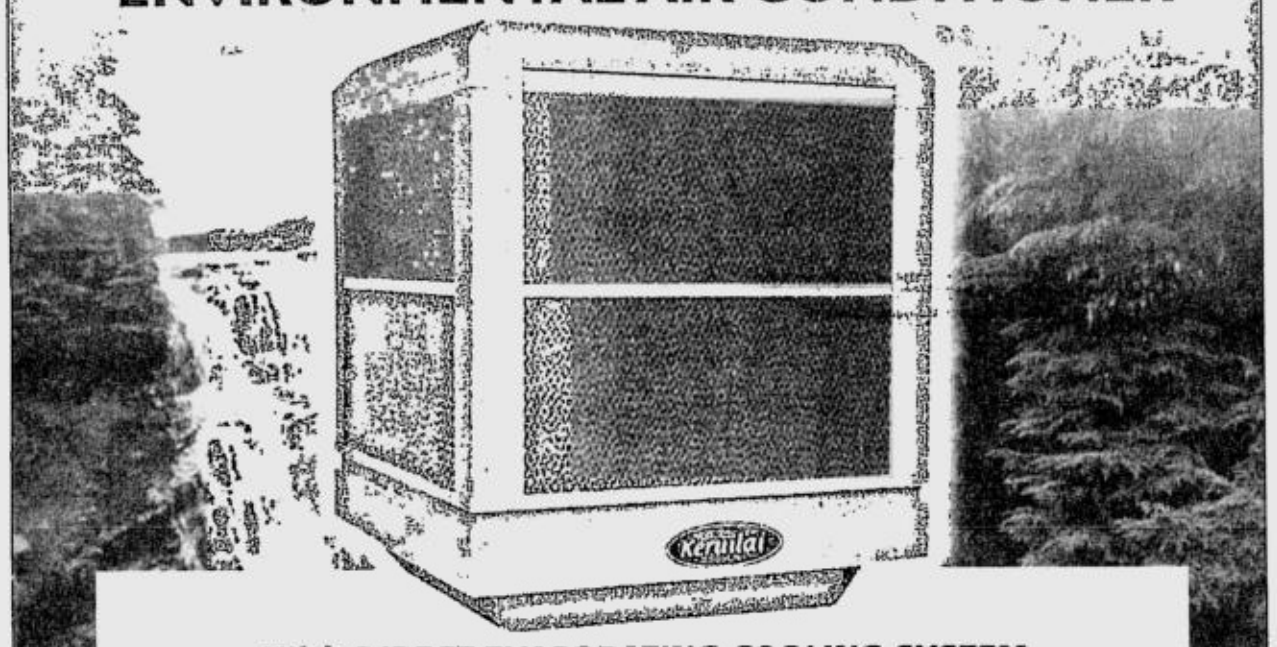

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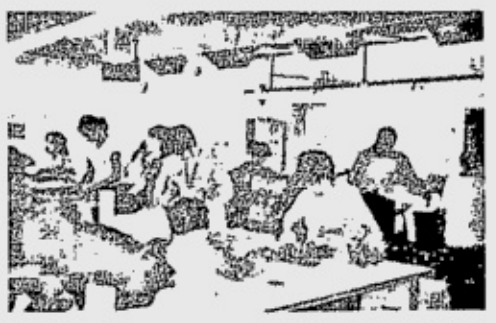

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DISCLOSURES

BANK of the Philippine Islands declared a regular cash dividend of P.90 per share to all its BPI common shares stockholders of record date as of May 10. The dividends are payable on May 25.

* * *

A. SORIANO Corp. disclosed the election of Ernest K. Guyugkeng as executive vice president and chief financial officer of the company.

* * *

GLOBAL Business Holdings Inc. elected Mary V. Ty, Vicente J. Carlos, Francisco C. Sebastian, Arthur V. Ty, Antonio S. Abacan Jr., George S.K. Ty and Washington Z. Sycip as directors of the corporation.

* * *

FILIPINO Fund Inc. postponed the company's annual stockholders' meeting from May 10 to June 7, 9 a.m., at the Turf Room Manila Polo Club. The company retains March 9 as the record date.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 7, 4 p.m. at Cityland 10 Tower II, Ayala North Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of May 8 are entitled to vote during the meeting.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Realty & Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 28, 4 p.m. at The Plaza Penthouse, Philippine Stock Exchange, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Only stockholders of record date as of May 15 are entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting. The stock and transfer books will be closed from May 16 to June 5.

Compiled by Chona Galang, PDI Research

Imports continue ...

From page B1

hopefully, with the easing of crude oil prices, imports will pick up in the second half."

Aside from electronics, other top imports for February were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials, which accounted for $423.68 million of the total import bill; industrial machinery and equipment, $120.78 million; iron and steel, $92.55 million; transport equipment, $81.66 million;

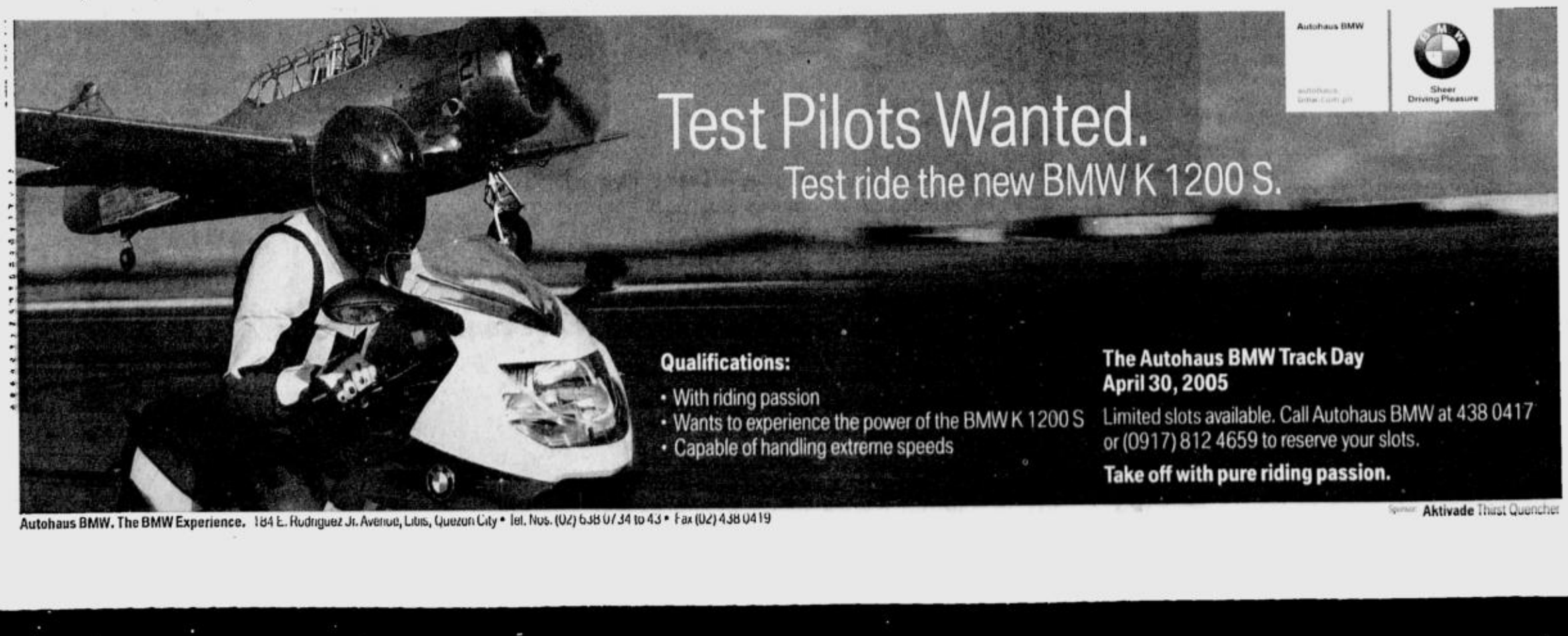
Telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, $65.77 million; cereals and cereal preparations, $64.62 million; plastics in primary and non-primary forms, $55.47 million; organic and inorganic chemical, $53.03 million, and textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products, $51.15 million.

The NSO said Japan was still the Philippines' biggest supplier, accounting for 18.3 percent of the total import bill. Shipments from Japan amounted to $520.6 million.

Other top sources of imports were: the United States, $453.68 million; Singapore, $222.28 million; Taiwan, $206.38 million; Republic of Korea, $168.85 million; People's Republic of China, $150.71 million; Malaysia, $117.73 million; Hong Kong, $111.3 million; Thailand, $102.33 million, and Iran, $94.73 million.

CURRENCIES

April 26, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.768994	1.000000	54.1060
Japan	Yen	0.007280	0.009467	0.5122
United Kingdom	Pound	1.470009	1.911600	103.4290
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098637	0.128268	6.9401
Switzerland	Franc	0.647683	0.842247	45.5706
Canada	Dollar	0.621460	0.808146	43.7255
Singapore	Dollar	0.467275	0.607644	32.8772
Australia	Dollar	0.599045	0.778998	42.1485
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.039881	2.652661	143.5249
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205060	0.266660	14.4279
Brunei	Dollar	0.465860	0.605804	32.7776
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000103	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.019508	0.025368	1.3726
UAE	Dirham	0.209381	0.272279	14.7319
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.300400	70.3594
Argentina	Peso	0.265171	0.344828	18.6573
Brazil	Real	0.304155	0.395523	21.4002
Denmark	Kroner	0.134268	0.174602	9.4470
India	Rupee	0.017634	0.022931	1.2407
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202394	0.263193	14.2403
Mexico	New Peso	0.069581	0.090483	4.8957
New Zealand	Dollar	0.560287	0.728597	39.4215
Norway	Kroner	0.122842	0.159744	8.6431
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012940	0.016827	0.9104
South Africa	Rand	0.126876	0.164989	8.9269
Korea	Won	0.000770	0.001001	0.0542
Sweden	Kroner	0.109417	0.142286	7.6985
Syria	Pound	0.014814	0.019264	1.0423
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024552	0.031928	1.7275
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000358	0.000466	0.0252



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Manufacturing industry output climbed 2.4% in February

By Michelle V. Remo

MANUFACTURING output in February posted a 2.4-percent year-on-year increase in volume, and an 11-percent rise in value, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

NSO data showed, however, that the 2.4-percent growth in the Volume of Production Index (VoPI) and the 11-percent rise in the value of production index (VaPI) growth in February were lower than the January figure of 2.7 percent and 13.6, respectively.

An increase in manufacturing output normally indicates an expected increase in demand among manufacturing companies in the months ahead.

The NSO, basing its report on the latest Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries (MISSI), said the increase in the volume and value of production was led by the furniture and fixtures, textile, beverage, miscellaneous manufactures and footwear and wearing apparel, petroleum products, chemical products, non-metallic mineral products, and leather products sectors.

The NSO also reported that manufacturing companies registered a 5.5-percent increase in the value of their net sales.

This was an improvement from the 3-percent year-on-year increase recorded in January.

The growth in the value of sales was due to the increase recorded by the following sub-sectors: basic metals, transport equipment, petroleum products, furniture and fixtures, leather products, publishing and printing, wood and wood products, textiles, chemical products, rubber products, non-metallic mineral products and paper and paper products.

On the other hand, volume of net sales declined by 4.6 percent, due to lower sales from sectors such as tobacco, whose excise taxes were increased early this year, machinery excluding electrical, fabricated metal products, electrical machinery and footwear and apparel.

The 4.6-percent drop, however, was still better than the 8.7-percent year-on-year decline recorded in January.

The NSO also reported that the average capacity utilization of manufacturing companies during the month stood at 79.8 percent.

Sectors that were operating at over 80-percent capacity include: machinery excluding electrical, electrical machinery, petroleum products, paper and paper products, miscellaneous manufactures, basic metals, rubber products, leather products, food manufacturing and chemical products.

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AIR TRAFFIC INSTRUMENT

Subic int'l airport gets safety boost

By Allan Macatuno
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—A new instrument landing system (ILS) has been installed recently at the Subic Bay International Airport (SBIA) to boost the facility's domestic and international flights.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) Administrator Alfredo Antonio said the SBIA is now more "aircraft-friendly" with the installation of the new ILS system.

Antonio said the system would enhance the standards of the air navigation facility here and ensure aircraft and passenger safety.

The upgrade was made under a facilities lease operating agreement between the SBMA and Federal Express (FedEx), the international cargo giant that has made Subic its hub for international courier service operations.

"Subic has friendlier skies today, that's the net effect of the recent upgrade," Antonio said. "And we're banking on this to bring us more business because we know that passengers, as well as airline companies, put a premium on their safety.

"With the new ILS system, any aircraft, big or small, can land at Subic even under stormy conditions," he added. "This won't be possible in ordinary airports."

Marcelo Santos, SBIA manager, said the new system has been "flight checked" by the Air Transportation Office (ATO) and will be fully operational as soon as the ATO certification is released.

Santos said the ILS installed in Subic is a global air navigation electronic facility, a type designed for precision approach and landing.

Installed by Airways New Zealand, which provides air control services worldwide, the ILS would provide "the highest level of system integrity and availability," Santos said.

He added that the airlines' flight crew members are very familiar with the instrument and highly skilled in ILS approaches because their fleets are universally fitted with standard ILS equipment.

Among the airlines with international routes using the SBIA facilities are Cebu Pacific, which flies four times a week from Subic; Air Philippines, with two weekly flights; and Mandarin Airlines, also with two weekly flights. The airlines fly to Asian destinations like Taipei in Taiwan and Seoul in South Korea.

SBMA officials said the Subic freeport has started attracting more tourists from Japan, South Korea and other Asian countries.

A list of inbound passenger movement at the SBIA showed this growing trend, with 17,733 arrivals through international flights compared to 525 domestic arrivals in 2004. From January to March this year, 6,111 came in through international flights while 264 arrived on board domestic carriers.

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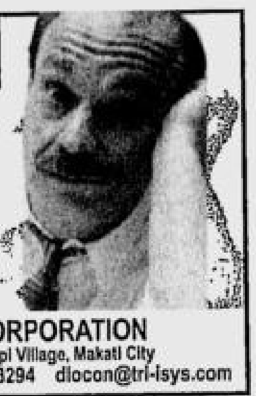

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Smart completes 92% acquisition of Piltel

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MOBILE phone operator Smart Communications Inc. now owns 92.14 percent of Pilipino Telephone Corp., virtually completing the consolidation of the PLDT Group's wireless business under Smart.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and its wholly-owned wireless unit Smart entered into a subscription and assignment agreement allowing the transfer and assignment to Smart of 766.9 million common shares of Piltel, which PLDT also owned.

The Piltel shares were transferred to Smart in exchange for 11.33 million shares of Smart preferred stock issued to PLDT for P157.23 million.

The PLDT board early last year approved Smart's plan to acquire the debt and equity of PLDT in Piltel, even if it fails to secure the approval of 75 percent of Piltel's creditors.

"Considering Piltel's supernatural return to health, these two transactions will enhance PLDT's profit and cash flow starting this year," PLDT and Smart chair Manuel Pangilinan earlier said.

Piltel is looking at hitting a profit of more than P3 billion this year, on the back of sustained growth in wireless subscribers and reduced operating costs.

A ranking Piltel official said that Piltel's subscribers would continue to grow from the estimated 4.2 million last year, as it continues to invest in promotions and marketing programs.

Mobile phone operations bring in close to 90 percent of the income of Piltel, which is focused on the mass market for mobile phones.

The official added that Piltel expects to bring down operating costs this year as it could avail itself of about a billion pesos in tax breaks.

If Piltel hits its target, it will be the second straight year that Piltel will make a profit after years of languishing in the red.

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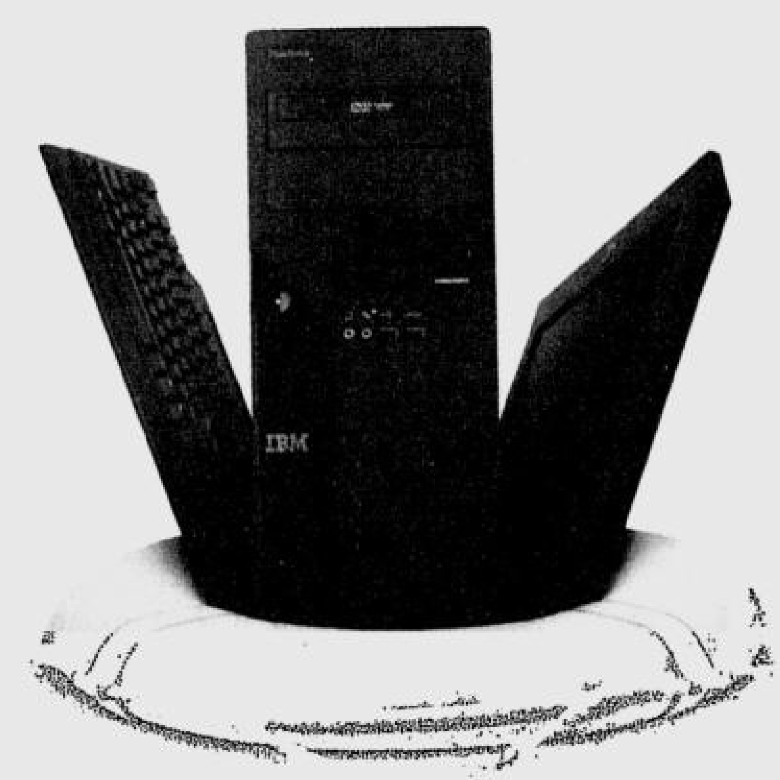

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BSP sets ground rules for probing erring banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has set new ground rules for investigating complaints against erring bank directors and officers.

According to Memorandum Circular 477 recently issued by the Monetary Board in line with its "fit and proper" rule, the BSP said it would only act on complaints done in writing. It would not consider anonymous complaints.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the BSP's Office of Special Investigation (OSI) will determine whether there is prima facie evidence against the alleged erring official.

If so, the OSI will file the formal charge with the supervised banks complaints evaluation group.

The OSI shall prosecute the case, which will in turn be heard by a hearing officer or a hearing panel.

Within 60 days after the hearing panel declares the case submitted for resolution, a report shall be submitted for decision by the Monetary Board.

The MB's resolution will become final 15 days from receipt, unless a motion for reconsideration is filed. No second motion for reconsideration will be allowed.

The General Banking Law of 2000 empowers the MB to penalize erring banks and banking officials.

If the offender is a director or officer of a bank, quasi-bank or trust entity, the MB may suspend or remove the director or officer from his post.

If the violation is committed by a corporation, it may be dissolved according to rules instituted by the Solicitor General.

The "fit and proper rule" was put in place to "maintain the quality of bank management and afford better protection to depositors and the public in general."

"After due notice to the board of directors of the bank, the MB may disqualify, suspend or remove any bank director or officer who commits or omits an act which render him unfit for the position," according to Section 66 of the GBA.

"In determining whether an individual is fit and proper to hold the position of a director or officer of a bank, regard shall be given to his integrity, experience, education, training, and competence," it added.

Sun Life names new president

INSURANCE giant Sun Life of Canada (Philippines) Inc. yesterday announced the appointment of former Philippine National Bank president Lorenzo Tan as its new president effective this July 8.

Tan, who steered PNB to profitability ahead of its own rehabilitation program, will be responsibe for the business growth and leadership of the group's insurance, pre-need and mutual fund businesses in the Philippines.

Banking sources said Tan was recruited to ensure business growth in the insurance, pre-need and mutual fund businesses, especially now that there was greater scrutiny by clients, given the current problems in the local pre-need industry.

Also, Esther Tan, who used to head Sun Life Financial, shall become the insurance group's chair. She was also appointed to the role of senior vice president for Agency Sun Life Financial Asia, a new regional position that acknowledges the importance of the agency as Sun Life Financial's primary distribution channel in Asia.

She will also continue as chair of Sun Life Financial Plans Inc. and Sun Life Asset Management Co.

Tan, on the other hand, was named one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in the country. He used to be president of the United Coconut Planters Bank before becoming the youngest head of PNB.

A certified public accountant, Tan also holds a BS Commerce from De La Salle University and Master of Management from Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University in the United States.

Sun Life Financial Inc., the publicly listed company of the Sun Life Financial group of companies, is the second largest life insurance company in the Philippines. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Turning barangay offices into efficient IT centers

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IT'S EVERY resident's dream to get what he needs from the barangay hall in a flash. No more waiting in line for hours just to get a barangay clearance or permit.

Since August of last year, computer and training school Informatics has been quietly turning this dream into reality.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Through its Barangay IT! program, Informatics is training at a discount barangay officials and employees how to harness computer education to provide better, faster and accurate services to the residents.

Informatics set up the Barangay IT program to "enhance barangay government productivity through computer education."

Under the first module of the program, interested barangay officials and staff are taught the basics of using a computer. They are acquainted with the keyboard, mouse, and basic programs such as Microsoft Word and Excel, which they can use in drafting their resolutions, income and expenditure reports.

Improving services

They are also taught to access the Internet to give them information they need to draft their resolutions, and to send and receive e-mail.

The second training module covers assembling a computer; using the advanced features of Microsoft Word and Excel to build a barangay database; and Microsoft PowerPoint to prepare presentations and speeches.

Leo Riingen, Informatics president, told the INQUIRER that the Barangay IT program was born out of the company's desire to help the government use information technology to improve services, as part of the government's drive toward e-governance.

No database

Under the present system, barangay documents, such as clearances, are done manually, thus, it takes a while before the documents are released.

Forms are also prepared manually, and often with no set standard. Record keeping is almost non-existent since there is no database to speak of.

Riingen says that Informatics is in a position to help the barangay units organize their operations since it has the expertise and the facilities—such as 48 study centers all over the country—to provide the government officials the training that they need.

INFORMATICS Philippines and Liga ng mga Barangay formalize their partnership for the Informatics Barangay IT program. Leo Riingen, president and CEO of Informatics and James "Marty" Lim, national president of Liga ng mga Barangay were joined by DILG Undersecretary Melchor Rosales and Paul Kah of the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore.

Informatics operates the country's biggest network of computer learning centers. It has 48 centers of which 11 are company owned. The rest are held by franchisees.

Hall of Fame

Informatics has been elevated to the Hall of Fame of the Philippine Franchise Association for the non-food category.

Riingen says Informatics sat down with the officials of the Liga ng mga Barangay, the umbrella organization of barangay leaders, to develop the curriculum that would suit the unique needs of the barangay.

Riingen says that barangay units in Cavite, Mandaluyong and Valenzuela have so far signed up for the program, costing P5,000 per person—P2,000 off from the usual price tag of P7,000.

Benefits

Already, Riingen says, the communities are reaping the benefits of the program.

He hopes that more barangay officials will enroll in the training program, go to the nearest Informatics study center for lessons, and apply what they learned.

"It is important to expose [the community officials] to computers, so that they won't be afraid of them," Riingen says.

He estimates that it will take two to three years to complete the computer training of the 48,000 barangay units in the country.

Riingen is confident that other barangay units will be turned on to the Barangay IT program as there is a bigger return on investment, compared to the money spent in the construction of the usual waiting sheds and basketball courts.

"Our plan is to eventually put the barangay [units] online," Riingen says.

The Barangay IT program is just one of many projects that Informatics in the Philippines has invested in.

Another endeavor is the IT 4HumanITy program, which was put up to address the need to promote information technology training and education to underprivileged Filipino youth.

Starting Dec. 2, 2001, Informatics has been teaching basic IT skills to Filipino youth on Sundays in over 40 centers across the Philippines.

Informatics also gives IT training scholarships for disabled youth, and it also helps find jobs for its graduates.

Riingen says Informatics has given scholarships to hundreds of youth and is now preparing a training program for teachers, to help them become more productive by using computers.

Informatics is prepared to do even more for it believes that information technology, and its long-range benefits, is for everyone.

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Shoe retailer Charles & Keith signs up for Alliance Software

ALLIANCE Software, an ISO-certified software developer, was chosen by fast-rising shoe retailer Charles & Keith to provide its seven stores nationwide with an integrated point of sales (POS) system.

The new POS system has provided Charles & Keith significant advantages since it implemented the system in November 2004. The Alliance POS system was developed especially for the Filipino retailer and is therefore easy to use and can be customized to suit the company's specific needs. Easy data replication through the company's virtual private network has also become possible.

Charles & Keith is confident that the technological partnership with Alliance will provide positive changes in the company's business in the long term.

With the Alliance POS system firmly in place, Charles & Keith is now able to monitor sales and inventory data on a daily basis. Its head office in Cebu can monitor all branches in real time, allowing the company to fast-track and improve inventory management.

"Accurate inventory management through Alliance POS meant that I can stock the right shoe model and size at the right outlet at the right time," said Chinky Cortes, operations manager.

"We were also able to come up with the reports that we wanted," Cortes added. "With our previous POS provider we could not do this, hence the switch.

"Most POS providers would be enough only for stand alone stores. But having multiple branches, sales and inventory monitoring is a little bit tougher.

"We needed a system that could track sales and inventory—accurately in real time," Cortes said. "Alliance POS has enabled us to do this. It's really empowerment through information technology."

REPORT'S FINDINGS

Opec's output increase fails to dampen prices

LONDON—The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries appears to have no intention of increasing crude oil output to levels that would drive prices under 50 dollars a barrel, the Centre for Global Energy Studies (CGES) said in its monthly report published Monday.

"There is no sign of any concerted action designed to bring prices down below $50 a barrel and keep them there," according to the widely-respected CGES report.

"There is an evident reluctance on the part of Opec's only member with the power to influence the market—Saudi Arabia—to boost output beyond the volumes nominated by customers," it added.

At its last meeting on March 16 in the Iranian city of Isfahan, the oil cartel raised its production ceiling by 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 27.5 million bpd and said a similar increase would be considered if high prices continued.

Oil prices broke historic records on April 4, reaching $58.28 a barrel in New York and $57.65 in London, amid concerns that strong global demand could outpace supply.

Opec kingpin Saudi Arabia "appears happy with the prices it is getting now, despite the signs of rising pressure from the US President (George W. Bush) for a further increase in the kingdom's oil output", CGES said.

"Even though the Saudi oil minister stated in Paris recently that 'in today's world, $50 a barrel is too high a price,' so far the market has not seen any hard evidence that the kingdom plans to do anything about it," the CGES said.

Questioned during the sixth international oil summit being held in Paris last Thursday, the kingdom's oil minister Ali al-Nuaimi said: "Saudi Arabia is not responsible for the price of oil in the market."

He added: "We try to respond to our customers, we have not turned down a customer who says 'I want additional oil'."

After reaching record levels this month, a subsequent dip in oil prices persuaded Opec not to sanction an additional 500,000 million bpd rise, the CGES added.

Prices "fell heavily, dropping by more than $6 a barrel in the space of two weeks ... prompting the Organization to postpone any possible 500,000 bpd output increase on top of that agreed in early March".

CGES added: "Opec's promise of more oil to help bring down soaring prices has only been delivered in part."

That was despite forecasts of increased global consumption during 2005.

"Although (oil) demand forecasts for 2005 have been revised slightly by both the CGES and the IEA (International Energy Agency) this month, we still see global consumption growing by more than 2.0 percent this year."

A widely-predicted gradual economic slowdown would meanwhile not hold back demand—particularly from China. *AFP*

6 years of euro promotes integration, study shows

FRANKFURT—The perfect union it might not be, but the 12-nation euro currency bloc is increasingly taking on the contours of a lasting marriage, European Central Bank research has found.

The launch of the euro six years ago defied the economic theory of an 'optimal currency area,' which says an integrated fiscal policy and political structure are needed for a single currency like the euro to thrive.

In their study published this month, ECB economist Francesco Paolo Mongelli and Paul De Grauwe, international economics professor at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, found evidence the euro zone is developing characteristics that over time may turn it into an optimal currency area.

In other words, an early marriage unleashed forces that may drive the euro area towards greater economic integration.

"On the whole our conclusion is one of moderate optimism," De Grauwe and Mongelli wrote in the ECB working paper.

Their findings are particularly timely, given recent data on widening growth gaps among euro zone states and some polls suggesting citizen dissatisfaction with the euro.

Additionally, concern that France may reject the European Union constitution in a May 29 vote has stirred questions over whether EU political integration would slow, weakening or even undermining support for monetary union over time.

The working paper, entitled "Endogeneities of Optimum Currency Areas: What brings countries sharing a single currency closer together?" said that despite limited political unity, European Monetary Union is bringing economies closer together.

It has fostered more trade among euro area states, lowered financing costs and improved labor and price competition.

The economic literature suggests the launch of the euro may have encouraged trade among euro zone countries to increase by as little as a few percentage points to as much as 100 percent, the researchers said.

Inflation came down markedly in the 1990s as countries prepared for monetary union and there has been a significant decline in cross-border price volatility. For instance, volatility between German prices and those in Italy, Spain and Portugal has declined 20 percent post-EMU, the researchers said.

However, there is a cautionary note. One study shows there has been no tendency for prices to converge further since the euro's launch in January 1999.

Financial market integration also still has a way to go, the researchers said, though some progress has been made.

Overall, though, the authors said economic factors are at work knitting the euro area closer together. What remains to be seen is how quickly these factors work, and whether non-economic factors such as history and culture are also at play. *Reuters*

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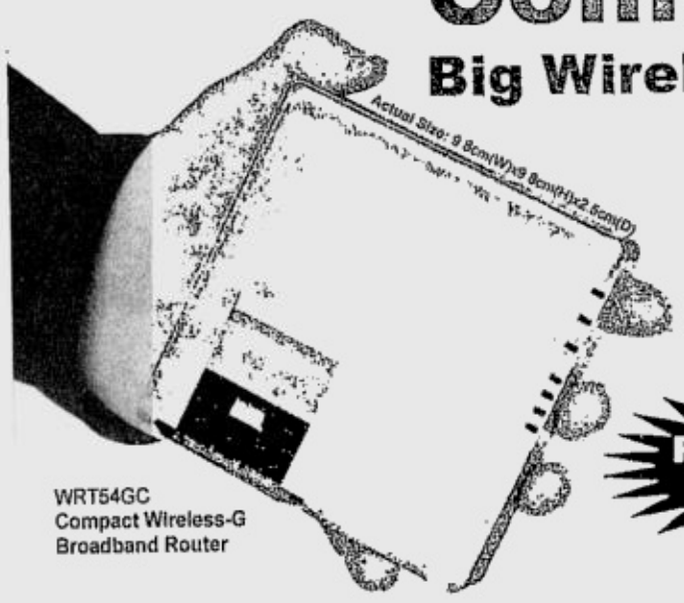

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BMW X3 2.5i Exec.
2004 Black Sapphire
7,470km, P3,450,000

BMW X3 2.5i Exec.
2004 Titanium Silver
2,886km, P3,380,000

BMW 530d Exec.
2005 Black Sapphire
68km, P4,490,000

BMW 530i Exec.
2005 Alpine White
543km, P4,350,000

BMW 525i Exec.
2005 Titanium Silver
62km, P4,360,000

BMW Z4 2.5i Roadster
2005 Titanium Silver
50km, P3,450,000

BMW 325i M Sport
2005 Topaz Blue
68km, P3,420,000

BMW 325i Exec.
2005 Oxford Green
83km, P3,325,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2004 Orient Blue
16,353km, P2,100,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2004 Steel Grey
14,000km, P2,100,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2004 Titanium Silver
16,786km, P2,100,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2004 Titanium Silver
20,000km, P1,600,000

BMW 318i M Sport
2004 Titanium Silver
14,282km, P2,100,000

BMW 318i Limo.
2004 Titanium Silver
4,600km, P1,680,000

BMW 316i Limo
2004 Titanium Silver
7,000km, P1,450,000

Other cars available:

BMW 320iA
1996 Calypso Red
75,320km, P700,000

BMW 316i
1996 Calypso Red
22,294km, P650,000

BMW 316i
1997 Cosmos Black
64,763km, P600,000

BMW 316i
1996 Brilliant Red
55,490km, P600,000

BMW 523i
1997 Aspen Silver
65,000km, P1,150,000

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1st Manila Motor Show opens April 28

ALL ROADS lead to the World Trade Center in Pasay City from April 28 to 30 for the 1st Manila Motor Show and 2nd World Sports and Leisure Show.

Worldbex Services International (WSI), the organizer of grand expositions and events, gathers anew a powerhouse of companies and personalities with major car manufacturers and distributors in one sure-fire exciting event.

According to Joseph Ang, founding chair of WSI, "The very first Manila Motor Show intends to follow the likes of The North American International Auto Show, The Tokyo Motor Show and The Geneva Motor Show, which are most-attended, top caliber motor shows that have become the launch pad for new cars and the gauge from which the best in the industry are judged."

In cooperation with major car manufacturers and distributors, the Manila Motor Show will showcase the new lineup of 2005 models as well as a number of special vehicles and concept cars. Top-notch products at their best values such as the latest aftermarket auto parts, accessories, electronics, and gadgets, OEM supplies and related products are sure to draw crowds, too.

One of the highlights of the Manila Motor Show will be a lineup of the category winners of the Car of the Year Awards. The Car of the Year Awards was held Feb. 24.

Together with the Manila Motor Show is the 2nd World Sports and Leisure Show that will highlight the best in the sports and leisure industry, including sporting goods, equipment, sports clubs/schools, licensing, services, magazines, health and fitness centers, resorts and airlines from here and around the world. It is expected to draw a host of experts and prominent names in the sports and leisure business, sports coaches, instructors, pro and non-pro athletes, personalities from different sports associations, hobbyists and enthusiasts.

Visitors should also expect various engaging activities from industry-related associations participating in the 3-day event, which boasts longer operating hours from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight.

"It serves as an interactive marketplace where new business partnerships are sealed and old ones renewed," said Ang.

"With full support from our industry partners here and abroad, expect the Manila Motor Show & the World Sports and Leisure Show will be as celebrated and as huge as our other events," Ang added.

For more information, call WSI at 531-6350 or 534-3615; fax 533-2026; e-mail info@worldbex.com or log on to www.worldbex.com.

COCOLIFE NAMED 2004 OUTSTANDING LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Cocolife celebrates its 27th year with another resounding affirmation of its continuing commitment to excellence. The Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc and the National Consumers Excellence Awards recently named Cocolife as the 2004 Outstanding Life Insurance Company. The Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc is one of the most highly regarded organizations in the Philippines that pays tribute to outstanding Filipino achievers, manufacturers and products as well as service providers. The annual search aims to encourage and promote the country's social and economic progress. The awarding ceremony was held during the Annual Parangal ng Bayan and 20th National Consumers Excellence Awards April 2 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati City. The award was received by Cocolife president lawyer Alfredo C. Tumacder Jr (4th from right) together with individual and group marketing head Elmo Nobleza (4th from left). Joining them on stage are (from left) Bancassurance head Chris Ponce, Central Luzon area head Pete Antonio, Supreme Court Associate Justice Cancio C. Garcia, Metro Manila region head Mario Uy, marketing planning head Rowena Jael-Asnan and Parangal ng Bayan Foundation chair Sis. Vickie Dizon.

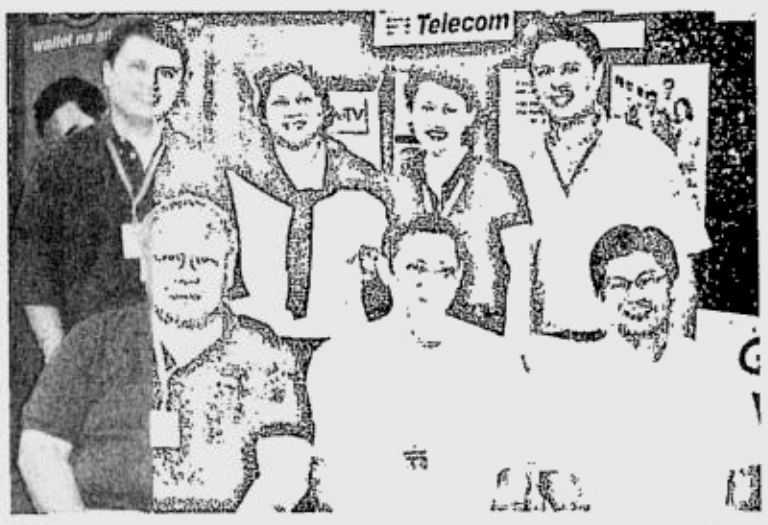
Globe's G-Cash eyed as new payment system for cable TV

FAST and easy bills payment can be made possible for cable TV subscribers through G-Cash, the revolutionary service from Globe that transforms cell phones into mobile wallets.

This was discussed at the annual convention of the Phillippine Cable TV Association (PCTA) held at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City recently. The 408-member strong PCTA has over 1 million subscribers representing 90 percent of the total cable TV market in the Philippines. During a speech before the PCTA members, G-Xchange Inc president Joey Mendoza emphasized the value of G-Cash as a convenient payment gateway for basic cable TV services and other entertainment products such as pay-per-view, prepaid cable and direct TV via satellite. According to Mendoza, "convergence of SMS and cable TV operations has the potential of widening subscriber access to cable TV."

G-Cash allows subscribers to pay for purchases and send or receive remittances, all through text. This innovative service recently won an international award for Best Mobile Messaging Service from the prestigious GSM Association. It can already be used to pay for a wide variety of products and services, including food/food delivery from Jollibee, Burger King, Shakey's, Max's and Goldilocks; books and school supplies from National Bookstore, Bibliarch, Fully Booked, Montage, and Sketch Books; medicines from Mercury Drug; reservations for marine transportation at Super Ferry and hotel accommodations at Westin Philippine Plaza; M-Pass reloading from myAyala SureSeats; fitness and personal care services at Gold's Gym and Urban Spa. It has even expanded its functionalities to cover renewal of business registration and now payment of income tax. Soon, you may also be able to pay your cable TV bills just by sending a text message.

To register for G-Cash, simply send REG <a 4-digit M-Pin of your choice>/<mother's maiden name>/<First name>/<Last name>/<Address> to 2882.



GLOBE presented the revolutionary G-Cash service in a trade exhibit sponsored by the PCTA (Philippine Cable TV Association) during its annual convention held in Cebu City recently. Shown is PCTA president Tony Selda (seated center) flanked by Charlie Nocon, president and CEO of Jade Pacific Telecom (JPT), a Globe strategic business partner (seated left), and Joey Mendoza (seated right), president of G-Xchange Inc, a subsidiary of Globe Telecom. Standing (from left) are Chuck Nocon (JPT), Trina Ycasiano (Globe), Jeannette Nocon (JPT) and Raymond Nocon (JPT).

BRUNEI NATIONAL DAY

The Brunei Embassy celebrated its 21st National Day at the Quezon Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Feb 23. Shown are, from left, Arlene Llasos Jacobo, Brunei Charge D' Affaires, a.i. Haji Haris Haji Tuah, Dr. Ronald Remulla, Gregory Alms, Third Secretary, US Embassy, Conrado L. Kison, Consulate, Republic of Togo, Fortune Aleta Ledesma, Honorary Consul of Monaco to the Philippines, Angeles 'Toto' Santocildes, and Paul KH Koh, Counsellor of the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore. The event was attended by members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, media, and friends of the embassy.

Power Plant Mall first mall-wide summer sale

SUMMER sizzles with Power Plant Mall's first ever mall-wide sale! Prepare to bare it all as it pares down prices with huge discounts of up to 70 percent off on summer essentials from April 27 to 30.

From head to toe, here are some of Power Plant Mall's summer picks to make this summer truly hot.

Have fun as you doll up with the Mimi's collection-face powder in natural color, powder blush to give your cheeks a natural flush, eye shadow in playful purple, bronze or violet, and color impact fashion lip gloss to match.

Candy-colored tops in eye-catching shades of hot pink, popsicle orange, aqua, lime green, lemon yellow, turquoise blue or in cool standard neutrals like beige, cream or white come in a mix of color palettes, fun stripes, classic checks, and playful floral prints this summer. Board shorts, Capri and cargo pants and mini-skirts are hot picks, too.

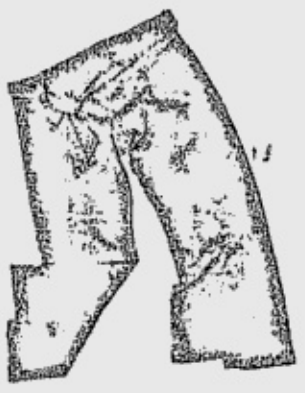
Try on Aura Athletica's Lotus Fresh Shiva Capri and Maya Tank Blade or check out Nullah's jazzed up butterfly-emblazoned jeans, playful board shorts and modern-oriental tops.

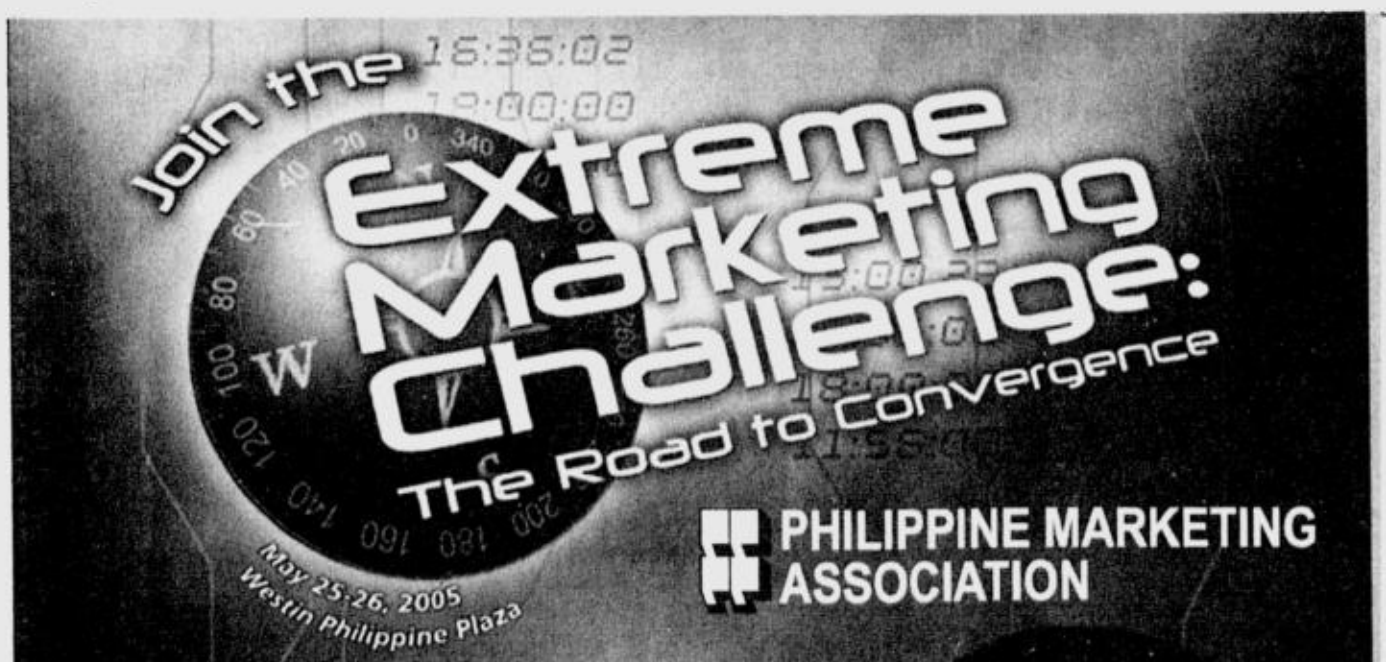
And now it's time to do it up to complete the look. Tote bags, jewelry, flip flops, wide-brim hats, sporty caps, scarves, sarongs, malongs, and caftans plus nifty gadgets like your iPod make for a fun party under the sun.

Pick out a pink necklace or a blue beaded bracelet at Mimi, or grab a Pineapple tote bag and Mella pink slippers at Aura Athletica, or treat your footsies to Whimsy's pink, white or blue slip-ons.

What's missing? The perfect bathing suit! A two-piece bikini, a tankini, a one-piece tank suit, a bandeau one-piece swimsuit, a maillot, a swimdress in colors, prints and patterns, cuts and styles of your choice. And if you'd rather feel sexy without flaunting it, check out Hot Pink's fly-away baby doll lingerie and raisin demi bra and thong.

So before you hit the beach and revel in the sun or cruise the metro with your friends, indulge in a little summer shopping while enjoying great discounts at the Power Plant Mall at Rockwell. Participating outlets include Bass, Bufini, Chocolate Clothing Co, cK Underwear, K & Company, Tyler, Marithe Francois Girbaud, Jessica, Mosaic Women, Croco Kids, Orange Juice, Philippe Charriol, and Officine, among others.





Featuring:
The New Imperative in Today's Convergence in Marketing: Sustainable Growth

Take a closer look at the "must haves" in dealing with the challenges of convergence in marketing for businesses to thrive and for sustainable growth to be achieved.

Mr. Gavin Coombes
Vice President, Euro RSCG Asia Pacific

For full programme schedule and other details:

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DAY 1 : May 25, 2005
Session Chair: Dr. Nick C. Fontanilla
President, The Asia Pacific Center for Research
Session One:
A Business Philosophy for Extreme Marketing: Pushing Your Limits in a Crisis Economy

Speaker: Bienvenido Policarpio
Executive Vice President, Prudential Group of Companies
President, Dale Carnegie Philippines

Session Two:
Customer Relationship Management: Building Technology to the Extreme

Speaker: Mr. Mark Yambot
Director for Corporate Affairs, Microsoft Philippines, Inc.

Session Three:
Pain Makes Gains: Pharmaceutical Companies Going Beyond Pain

Speaker: Mr. Carlos "Do" Ejercito
President, United Laboratories Group

Session Four:
The New Empire: Shaping the Future of High-Rise Condominiums

Speaker: Mr. Luke Tan
Director, Investor Relation, Megaworld

Session Five:
Challenging Global Brands through Sports Marketing Events

Speaker: Mr. Christophe Bezu
Senior Vice President, Adidas-Salomon AG, Hong Kong

Day 2 : May 26, 2005
Session Chair: Dr. Karen De Asis
Marketing Consultant
Marketing Director, La Salle Graduate School

Session Six:
Mega Formulas for Extreme Marketing from a Marketing Guru

Speaker: Mr. Hermawan Kartajaya
President & Leading Service Officer, MarkPlus&Co.

Session Seven:
The Telecommunications Industry Revealed: Telecommunications Convergence: Challenge to the Extreme!

Speaker: Mr. Charles Lim*
CEO, Digitel Mobile Philippines, Inc.

Session Eight:
The New Imperative in Today's Convergence in Marketing: Sustainable Growth

Speaker: Mr. Gavin Coombes
Vice President, Euro RSCG Asia Pacific

Session Nine:
Mall Mania: Shop Until You Drop!

Speaker: Ms. Grace F. Magno
Head of Marketing, Araneta Group of Companies

Session Ten:
New Rules in Market Leadership: Success Stories in Non-traditional Bank Marketing

Speaker: Mr. Tomas Victor Mendoza
SAVP, Banco de Oro Universal Bank

Session Eleven:
Creativity on the Edge: Media & Marketing Convergence

Speaker: Nicanor C. Gabunada
Senior Vice President for Integrated Sales & Marketing, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Company

Session Twelve:
Advertising Convergence: Bringing Filipino Consumers Closer to the Brand through Humor

Speaker: Mr. Joselito B. Ortega
Chairman & CEO, BrandLab, Inc.

Closing Session:
The Road to Recovery through Market Convergence

Speaker: Mr. Jose Jesus F. Roces
Professor, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)
President, Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APMF)

* Speaker for confirmation

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Yuan talk weighs on Asia stock markets

SINGAPORE—Rising expectations China will allow its currency to strengthen weighed on the dollar and lured hot money into Hong Kong stocks on Tuesday, while crude oil prices slipped on promises of more Saudi supplies.

Japanese shares slid a third of a percent to 11,035.83 ahead of earnings from market heavyweight Honda Motor Co. The stock fell just over 1.5 percent ahead of the company's full-year forecast and results, which later came in slightly below market forecasts.

Also weighing on the broader market was a 2.3 percent fall by consumer electronics giant Sony Corp.

The yen hovered near a two-month high against the euro and a one-month peak versus the dollar after Chinese economic officials suggested over the weekend that the yuan's decade-old peg could be loosened, but they gave no timeframe for doing so.

Analysts said China was unlikely to make a near-term change in the yuan's razor-thin band, suggesting the yen may be poised to retreat.

By 0545 GMT, MSCI's index of Asian shares outside of Japan was up a third of a percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index had gained 1.1 percent by midday and was poised for its biggest daily rise since mid-February.

Hong Kong's stock market is seen as the most liquid proxy for China's economic success story, and Chinese shares listed in Hong Kong are seen getting a boost if the yuan is revalued.

Investors and speculators have bought the yen and other Asian currencies as a simple bet that China will soon tweak its exchange rate policy.

Yen buying has been particularly sharp against the euro, which traded near 137.63 yen, not far from a two-month low of 137.02 yen hit on Monday, according to data from electronic trading platform EBS.

A weak German Ifo survey of business confidence, underscoring sluggish growth within the euro zone, garnered more attention from markets than reports showing Japanese growth remains tepid at best.

US stock markets climbed on news of a $6.9 billion takeover deal by Valero Energy Corp. for refiner Premcor Inc. and a Wall Street upgrade of Apple Computer Inc..

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 0.83 percent to 10,242.47. The Nasdaq rose 0.96 percent.

Taiwan's weighted index gained nearly one percent ahead of earnings from TSMC and AU Optronics, which rose 3.6 and 2.3 percent respectively. *Reuters*

Arthur Andersen settles lawsuit

NEW YORK—Arthur Andersen denied wrongdoing Monday after reaching a settlement with WorldCom investors who had accused the telecommunications company's former outside auditor of failing to protect them from WorldCom's historic $11 billion (8.48 billion euro) accounting fraud.

US District Judge Denise Cote scheduled a preliminary approval hearing on the settlement for Tuesday and banned each side from discussing its details publicly.

The deal interrupted a trial in its fifth week on the accusations contained in a class action lawsuit brought after WorldCom's 2002 collapse, the largest bankruptcy in US history.

Before the trial, major investment banks agreed to pay more than $6 billion (4.6 billion euro) in settlements and a dozen former board members settled the case for $24.75 million (19 million euro), leaving Arthur Andersen as the sole defendant.

Despite the judge's ban on public comments, Arthur Andersen spokesman Patrick Dorton issued a statement saying the company "elected to enter this settlement solely to avoid the risks and costs associated with continued litigation and expressly denies any liability or wrongdoing."

Although he refused to divulge details of the settlement, he said it was "in keeping with Andersen's strategic objective of satisfactorily resolving its remaining legal matters within reasonable cost parameters."

Dorton said trial testimony had "demonstrated that Andersen's auditors were victimized by a carefully designed and executed scheme by WorldCom's former management to conceal material financial information from Andersen's auditors as well as from the investing public."

Dorton later asked that his statement be embargoed until Tuesday and then asked that it be retracted because Andersen didn't authorize its release before Tuesday's court hearing.

The lawsuit was led by New York state Comptroller Alan Hevesi, acting as trustee of the state employees' retirement system. He had no comment about the settlement.

It's not known where Andersen would get the money for a settlement. But industry expert Mark Cheffers said it likely has funds left over from liquidating its assets or in its reserves for insurance losses.

The plaintiffs maintained that WorldCom's annual financial statements for 1999, 2000 and 2001 contained false statements and that Arthur Andersen issued its audit opinions with an "intent to deceive, manipulate or defraud." *AP*

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Atty. Alfredo C. Tumacder, Jr. (middle), President of Cocolife receives Parangal ng Bayan trophy. With him are Supreme Court Associate Justice Cancio Garcia and Foundation Chairperson Sis. Vickie Dizon.

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Mr. Loumel C. Maagma (middle), First Vice President of Cocolife HealthCare during the Parangal ng Bayan Awarding Ceremonies. Also in photo are Supreme Court Associate Justice Cancio Garcia and Foundation Chairperson Sis. Vickie Dizon.

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Court interpreter finds fulfillment in courtrooms dramas

By Candy G. Villanueva
Contributor

THE METROPOLIS is beset with illegal vendors, snatchers, jay walkers, prostitutes and rugby addicts freely roaming the traffic-jammed and smog-filled streets. A number of them eventually end up at the Metropolitan Trial Courts of Manila (MeTC). Confused, incoherent and sometimes intoxicated, they rely on court interpreters to plead their case. Jennifer Balboa is one of these court interpreters who day after day translate lawyers' English questions to Tagalog and the Tagalog answers of the witnesses to English at the 19th branch of the MeTC.

Often, it may seem like a thankless job as she is exposed to desperate and disadvantaged witnesses. Sometimes, she claims she gets scolded for interrupting witnesses in their testimony simply because she couldn't keep up. But all in all, it is a job Balboa has embraced for almost seven years because of the drama of the courtroom. Often, the action that she witnesses behind the stand is just as, or even more exciting, than the courtroom scenes in every Pinoy's favorite blockbuster. And then of course, there are the people.

Courtroom cast

"Everyone is a character. Everyone has a story. Everyone is a sight. Some even talk poetically without them knowing it. Some days are action-packed, some have high drama. Some are calm." These are some of Balboa's observations on the people she interacts with everyday in her work. As court interpreter, she encounters different characters from different walks of life more rich and interesting than the characters she reads in her favorite novels. From judges to vagrants, lawyers to detention prisoners and legal researchers to illegal gamblers, for Balboa, the courtroom is a stage of personalities.

As court interpreter, her main task is to translate the court proceedings to litigants who are not conversant in English. "I must always be present in court sessions, especially during days when criminal cases are heard. It is during the hearing of criminal cases when parties are mostly impoverished and undereducated, and are therefore unable to speak and understand English well."

During an arraignment, she translates the criminal information to the accused before they enter their pleas. Balboa also translates the English questions of the lawyers to Tagalog for the witnesses during trials. Conversely, she then converts the Tagalog answer of the witness to English for the stenographer who transcribes the proceedings. Aside from translating, Balboa also assists the parties in signing the minutes and resetting of cases, marks exhibits during pre-trial and trial, types calendars (the daily schedule of cases to be heard), and prepares produce and mediation orders.

Civil service eligibility

Balboa says that civil service eligibility is necessary for the job. A graduate from any four-year course is welcome to try the challenge of the courtroom. A majority of court employees come from state universities, secretarial colleges and computer colleges. "After about seven years of working in the government, I have observed that graduates from these kinds of schools are even able to cope better with the atmosphere and bulk of workload in court as a government office," shares Balboa.

A BS Journalism cum laude graduate from the Lyceum of the Philippines, Balboa needs more than a good grasp of the English and Tagalog language to fulfill her tasks. Aside from communication proficiency, typing skills are a must. Thursdays or "typing days" as she calls them, are devoted to stacks of paperwork. This may not seem to be daunting except that she prepares pages and pages of minute forms and calendars through the oldest form of word processing: the typewriter.

Problems in public service

The steady and sometimes somewhat intrusive clacking of the keys is the least of Balboa's problems. In fact, the continuous sound the outdated machine makes is soothing for Balboa. What the work demands more from her is patience. "In the court and in the government, more than intelligence or skill, you must have patience. This is public service, after all," confesses Balboa. The twenty-something interpreter claims that the challenge often comes from dealing with litigants. She says some of them are hardheaded and rude. But according to her, sometimes even the lawyers are just as hard to deal with. "I have been scolded by a few lawyers for interrupting their witnesses who seem to be forgetting that I am only human and not a machine, and that I cannot memorize a lengthy narration and still translate it verbatim," says Balboa in good humor.

Then there are the judges. Balboa confesses that sometimes she gets reprimanded during trials. Judges would get impatient if she pauses too long between translations. "And once, I have been scolded by both the judge and a lawyer for scolding a witness who kept saying "*ano*" (what) in her testimony with me asking in a slightly irritated tone, "*e ano nga ung ano*? (what is what?)" All these she took in stride and with good humor. In fact, she swears she never once resented being scolded or corrected in open court. That is because in the madhouse of the courtroom, where neighbors sue each other for illegal cable connections or where *japuyukis* are convicted for adultery, she finds fulfillment, and oddly, peace.

BALBOA ROGER MARGALLO

Peace in an unlikely place

At the start, the low wages and the sometimes overwhelming bulk of cases frustrated Balboa. But after years of working for the government, she has developed a great sense of appreciation and fulfillment in her job. "I do not have to prove anything around here, as long as I do the job. It kinda gives me a sense of peace (well, at least a sense of it)."

It was Balboa's mother, who has been working for the courts for about 20 years now, who influenced her to join the 19th branch of the MeTC. It was the mother's intention to get Balboa in to encourage her to take up law. Balboa had other things in mind. She took up literature. Balboa is currently taking her masters of arts in language and literature at De La Salle University not only to improve her translation skills but mostly to create a work of art from the rich source of stories that is the courtroom.

And so on Fridays, when the courts adjourn and all the records of cases have been collected, she reads and writes about the interesting characters and cases she encounters on and off court. She often enjoys observing litigants and lawyers or Supreme Court employees go about their business. "I just sit back and watch. I even use my typewriter sometimes for my term papers. The boss, when he notices this, reaches for and answers the phone himself even when it is on my table. Sometimes, the sheriff jokes about when he will read himself in one of my books."

(E-mail the author at candyvillanueva@pldtdlst.net.*)*

What are the keys to effective problem solving?

DEAR WW: I am constantly bringing issues to the attention of my boss and team and all I get are blank stares. How do you awaken people from their slumber and get them to focus on the important stuff at work?

The Last One Standing

Robert Reich, the labor secretary from the Clinton administration had an interesting observation about this topic. He said that too many of us are heat-shields at work. We spend all of our time putting out fires. He believes more of us need to become heat-conductors and pass the heat on to our bosses, coworkers, HR, etc.

Below I've listed a series of steps that you can take to better conduct the heat you're feeling at work. For more strategies, check out "Coach Yourself" by Grant and Greene (Perseus, 2001)

Exactly what is the problem? I can't tell you how many times in my career I've been so enamored with a creative solution that I've come up with that I never fully identify the problem that I was trying to fix.

Sound familiar? This creates two new problems. First, it robs us of the support we'd gain from bosses and coworkers when they agree that the problem is really a problem. Second, often the problem that you are trying to solve isn't readily apparent, so you end up attacking a symptom rather than the source of the problem. This is why it's so important to take time to fully identify the problem you're trying to solve.

What are the positive advantages of solving the problem? Maybe your boss is asleep and not inclined to act no matter what happens at work. On the other hand, it could also be that you haven't presented your case in a compelling enough way. Outline all of the benefits that you see happening once you've solved this problem. Not only can this help sell your boss, it may also give you new insight into what you can do to get even greater benefit out of your solution.

What are the hidden benefits of not solving the problem? To paraphrase General George Patton, you should never enter into a battle if you won't gain anything from winning it. Ask yourself, are there any advantages to not solving this problem. Use the answer to help you decide what to do next.

What are the costs of the problem? Don't limit yourself to just dollars and cents. Make a comprehensive list of all of the resources that are consumed by this problem. A good handle on the cost impact won't guarantee success, but it should increase the odds they'll at least pay attention to the problem.

How do you feel about the problem now? As you've gone through this process, has your view of the nature of the problem and it's size and scope changed?

Use these strategies and hopefully you won't get burned out at work, you'll be passing on the heat to people who can help you to put out the fires.

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: Which movie title describes your approach to problem solving at work?

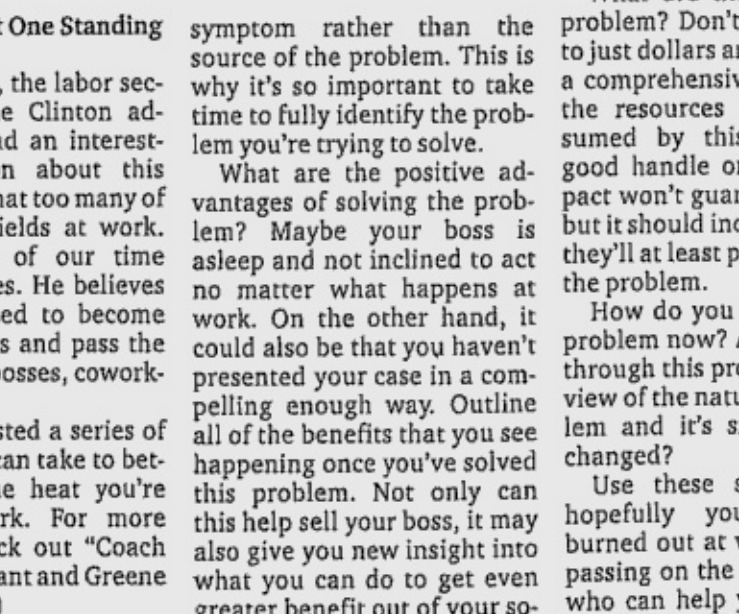
—"Dumbo," 7.2 percent

—"Cape Fear," 19.7 percent

—"Singin' in the Rain," 35.4 percent

—"Trouble in Mind," 37.5 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.*)*



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'I'd like to shift to a career in fund management'

By Tita Datu Puangco

I HAVE been regularly reading your articles in PDI. I am 32 years old, married and working as an officer in one of the biggest group of companies in the country. I have been in my field for 10 years already. This is my specialization since I have worked for my entire career life doing this kind of job.

There are times when I would feel unhappy about what I'm doing. Normally, I would read motivational books to fire myself up. But I guess it is no longer working. I'm thinking of a career shift. Actually, I thought about my situation years ago and tried to look for another job but with no results. Some of my friends are telling me that it is not practical to shift to another career at this point. Honestly, I don't feel confident when applying for a job in another field. I can also feel the hesitation of my prospective employer during interviews because my skills do not match the required experience and they are not comfortable giving me a rank-and-file position.

I am particularly interested in fund management. Knowing how critical the function is, I am having difficulty getting a job that would give me skills in this area. I decided to enroll in an MBA class starting this June, hoping that this will help me achieve my purpose. But this would still take me about two years to finish.

Do you think this is the right move? Should I pursue the job I want while studying or wait until I'm finished? I'm getting advice from friends that if I want to shift career, I must do it now due to age limitations.

There are also some friends advising me that employers will have more confidence in me if I finish my MBA even if I'm applying for a job different from my work exposure. However, I also receive comments that it will become more difficult for me to shift to another career after graduating from MBA because I can no longer go down in terms of the salary and job position. I'm confused with all the advice I am getting.

I'm really determined to pursue a career in another field of my profession. I am also willing to undergo training, if needed. I am also excited to know what else I can do and what I can do better. I just regret that I did not act on it earlier, that's why I'd like to plan everything carefully and make sure I'm doing the right thing.

Would you advise me to get a career consultant? Please recommend people or an agency that can help me. The thought of pursuing the job I want inspires and excites me, but it also makes me feel more unhappy with my current work. God bless and more power!

Confused Lady

Thank you for your letter. I am not surprised that a person in your kind of job will seek a career change. Before you do, let me ask you a number of questions. What do you dislike best about your current job? What do you like most? What is it about the job of a fund manager that attracts you? Answering these questions will make your understand better the reasons for your feeling of anxiety.

If you belong to a conglomerate, you may not need to look outside of the company. You already have a record of performance in your current company. What is needed is to have a conversation with your human resource manager to find out how internal recruitment and transfers are done. You can also inquire if the company has a career planning system and process that will allow you to think purposively of your career moves.

Once you have mapped out your career plan, then have a conversation with your boss. Share with him or her, your thoughts and seek concrete support for your plan. Sometimes, you may perform so well at your current job and your superior may hesitate to release you from your work immediately. But most bosses would be happy to give a career break to a deserving officer. They may even suggest the steps you can take to develop and move to the job of your dreams. If the job is not available inside the company, they can recommend you to colleagues and acquaintances.

I suggest that you work on your career plans now instead of waiting to finish your MBA. Spending time in a job that no longer inspires you is not fair to you or your company. But weigh things carefully. How well do you manage change? Can you manage taking up an MBA at the same time learning and transitioning to a new job like fund management? Depending on the company, fund management can be an exciting but also an exacting and stressful profession.

If you don't feel like confiding in your boss, then we can provide you career counseling. Call our office and set up an appointment. We would be happy to serve you. Meantime, take care and God bless!

(Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

Career mentors can help in your professional growth

By Vanessa Villaluz
Contributor

MENTORING, usually described as a practice in which a more experienced, older person takes a less experienced, younger person under his or her wings, traces its roots from Homer's Odyssey. Odysseus, before going off to battle the Trojans, entrusted his son's education and care to his friend Mentor.

There are many benefits to having a mentor. A mentor can help one advance in his or her career by sponsoring, providing exposure and opportunities for development. On the other hand, a mentor also acts as a role model and counselor to the protégé.

Organizations also benefit from mentoring. In Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" (1999), 77 percent of the companies viewed mentoring as a cost effective retention tool. In addition, it helps establish a cycle of passing along "institutional memory" because former protégés are more likely to become mentors themselves who help others learn the organization's culture and experiences. In short, it facilitates the organization's "continuity." The development of new leaders and increased risk-taking on the part of employees are also byproducts of the mentoring relationship.

Workers and their mentors

This month's People at Work Pulse report aims to shed light on Filipino workers' perceptions and experiences of mentoring. Forty-two respondents answered the survey, 27 men and 15 women. Most were between the ages of 26-30 years old (40 percent), the others between 20-25 (22.5 percent) and 31-35 years old (20 percent). The average number of years working was 8.36.

It is encouraging to note that 88 percent of the men and 80 percent of women respondents say that they have had a mentor. No differences were found for gender; however, results showed that their mentors were more likely to be male. For three-fourth of the respondents, mentoring relationships happened spontaneously, that is, not formally initiated on their part, by their mentor or a third party. Also, their mentors were usually their direct boss, followed by a supervisor other than their direct boss and a coworker or peer.

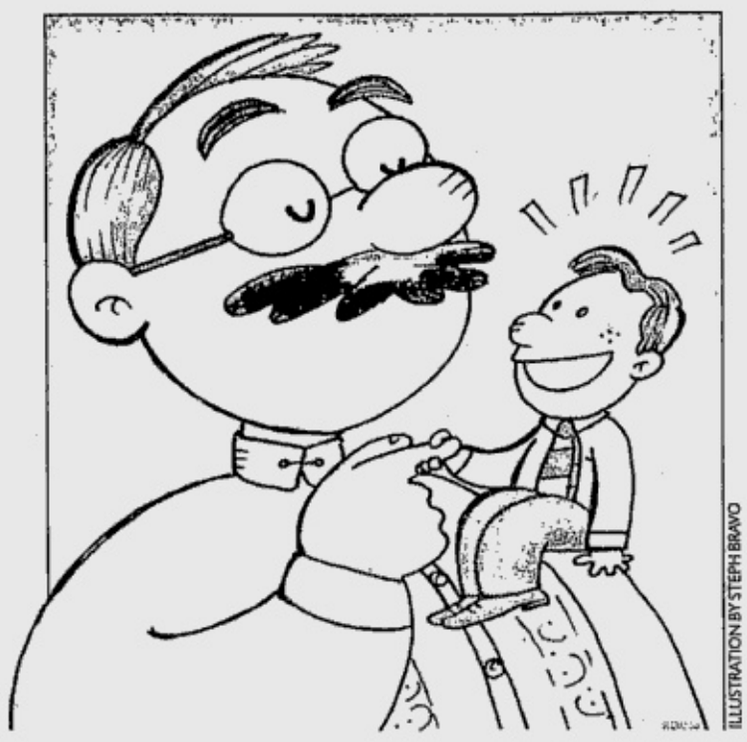
ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Role of the mentor

When asked to rank the most important thing that their mentor did for them, the top five responses were: 1) serve as a role model (27 percent), 2) help in developing their management, technical or interpersonal skills (20 percent), 3) direct them to become more efficient and effective on the job (13 percent), 4) give advise on their career development (11 percent), 5) listen to their professional and personal problems (9 percent) and give encouragement (9 percent). Lastly, three-fourths of respondents reported that they have no formal mentoring program in their organizations although half said that they would want one to be set up.

What can organizations do

Although sweeping generalizations cannot be made owing to the small sample size, the results suggest that mentoring does have great potential. Based on the survey, however, it is evident that most mentoring relationships happen instinctively and that being a role model is the most important thing that a mentor can do for their protégés. Given that 50 percent of those who do not have a formal mentoring program in their organization want one, organizations can start by training their leaders on mentoring. Organizations can also reward and make their leaders accountable for mentoring and coaching. A formal mentoring system that matches younger workers with mentors can be initiated by organizations more open to the idea.

Finding a mentor

A significant finding is that there are more male than female mentors. This may reflect the lack of representation of women in leadership positions. The lack of role models may in turn, deter the progress of younger women. Thus, mentoring initiatives can also be targeted towards women in order to expand their opportunities within the organization and encourage them to become mentors themselves.

On the other hand, the study suggests that even without a formal mentoring, it is possible to still have one. However, rather than just hoping that one gets mentored, perhaps our workers need to learn to take the initiative and find a mentor. At the heart of mentoring is trust and friendship.

For those who would like to have a mentor, look for someone you admire and respect in your field. It also should be someone who you get along with and believe in. But perhaps more importantly, a mentor is someone who has a generous heart who is willing to take the time to teach you life's lessons.

(Ms Villaluz is the associate director for OD and HR services of Ateneo CORD. Send feedback to ateneocord@admu.edu.ph.)

How do employees take leaves?

PEOPLE at work and the Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD) partner to listen to the heartbeats of working people through this People at work Pulse. The results of this "pulse" will be published the following month.

Winners from last month's survey are **Arthur A. Escleto** and **Cristina Miranda Valencia** (please contact Philippine Daily Inquirer at 897-8808 local 554 to claim your prizes).

1. How long have you been working in your organization? _____

2. What types of leaves does your organization offer? Indicate the duration of each (in days).
a. Sick leave/medical leave _____
b. Paternity leave _____
c. Maternity leave _____
d. Emergency leave _____
e. Study leave _____
f. Vacation leave _____
g. Others: _____

3. Which of these leaves have you taken? Choose as many as you can. (select from the choices in item no. 2) _____

4. Who do you inform about your leave? (Rank according to importance).
a. Supervisors
b. Subordinates/staff
c. Coworkers
d. Clients/customers
e. Others _____

5. Approximately, how much notice (in days) do you give your supervisor before taking a leave? _____

6. What factors do you consider when scheduling a leave?
a. Availability of people to take over work
b. Number of people already on leave
c. Excess leaves
d. Current work load
e. Peak season
f. Others: _____

7. In your organization, are unused leaves converted to cash/money?
a. Yes
b. No

Name: _____
Gender: _____ Age: _____ Civil Status: _____
Position: _____
Nature of the Job: _____
Company name: _____
Industry: _____
Employment status: (Full-time/ Part-time/ Contractual)
Telephone/ Mobile/E-mail: _____

Mail or fax this form, e-mail or text your answers to : People at Work Pulse, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Fax to (632) 426-6065, e-mail ateneocord@admu.edu.ph or text answers to (0920) 831-9522. Write: topic 1. (answer), 2. (answer), etc. name, gender, status, position, company, address, contact numbers and e-mail address.

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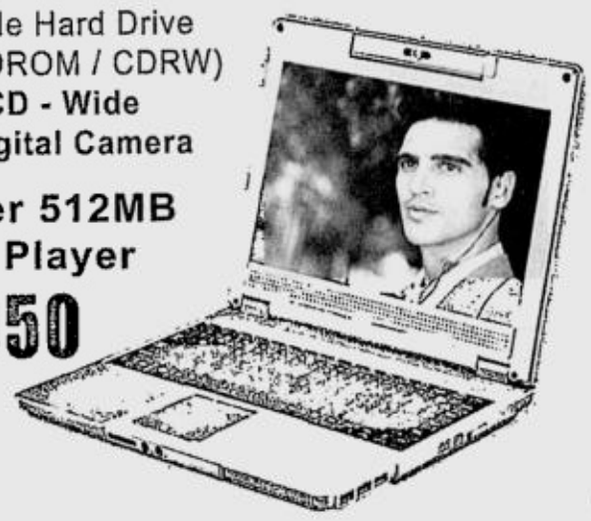

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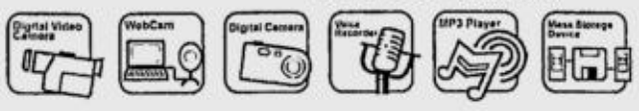

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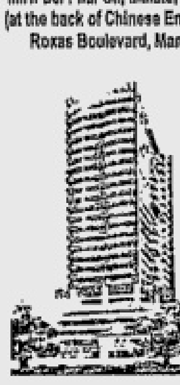

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Prime Twr 1BR 0921-7985148

RENT 2 OWN 2br P14T RFO 0928-2473987, 0921-5093620

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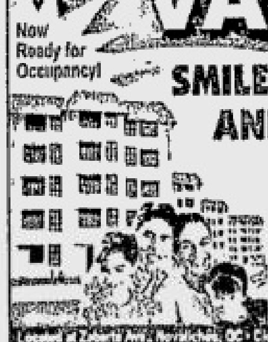

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SAN JUAN

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- Experience in IT distribution will be a definite advantage.
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Requirements
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Requirements:
- Female, single, 21 years old & above
- Graduate of Accounting or any business course
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- Assertive, highly motivated and can work with minimum supervision
- Experience in Bookkeeping is an advantage

Provincial Opening
REGIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVES (RSR)
Requirements:
- Male or Female, ages 22 years old and above
- Graduate of any degree course
- Must be extremely motivated & aggressive in pursuing success in his/her career
- Must have a strong entrepreneurial and excellent communication skills
- Proven record of experience in sales in the IT industry or any allied industries
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Bicol Region-(Legazpi)
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Eastern Visayas Region-(Tacloban)

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53 Tangali St. San Jose, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (0632) 363-7777 loc. 362 Or E-mail to: hrd@millennium.com.ph
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1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

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2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estates of the late Lorenzo C. Masilungan and Rosalina C. Masilungan were settled by their heirs on 4 March 2005 through an Extrajudicial Settlement of Estate, Doc. No 302, Book No. I, O.R. No 2840121, Service No. 990, Series of 2005, acknowledged before Vice Consul Ferdinand Philip F. Victoria of the Philippine Consulate General of the Republic of the Philippines in the City of Sydney, NSW, Australia.
(PDI – April 13, 20 & 27, 2005)

AUCTION SALE

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP INC. 100 C. Palanca St Quiapo, Manila will sell all unredeemed pledges for the months of OCT & NOV 2004 on MAY 18, 2005 at 2pm.
J. Lanuza Auctioneer
(PDI APRIL 27, 2005)

MUNOZ-BRIONES PAWNSHOP
May 9, 2005
All unredeemed article from Dec 1-31, 2004
354 Roosevelt Ave QC 9AM
109 Dela Rosa Makati 10AM
VZamora-Auctioneer

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of Rovin G. Asperilla who died on Aug. 26, 2000 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs before Notary Public Hobart T. Cocadiz as per Doc. No. 110 Page No. 23; Book No. 05 Series of 2005 (PDI- April 20, 27 & May 4, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the spouses Ricardo Morales and Erlinda Mateo consisting of a parcel of land, (TCT No. RT-5414-Bulacan) was extrajudicially settled by their heirs as per Doc. No. 462, Page No. 94, Book No. 121, Series of 2003 of the Notarial Register of Antonio R. Romulo of Bulacan (PDI-April 27, May 4, 11, 2005)

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Minimum Qualifications:

1. Filipino Citizen
2. Must have an earned doctoral degree from a prestigious university
3. Preferably not more than 59 years old at the time of application
4. Has an outstanding, relevant managerial and administrative experience
5. Morally upright and has never been convicted of any crime

In addition, nominees or interested applicants are required to submit six (6) sets of the following documents:

A. Detailed curriculum vitaé and certified supporting documents
B. Vision, mission, and management plan for the University
C. Full disclosure of all (pending or resolved) administrative, criminal and civil cases filed in any court or any private or government agency
D. Clearances from the following:
   - Sandigan Bayan
   - Civil Service Commission
   - Ombudsman
E. Medical Certificate
F. Neuro-Psychiatric Exam to be accomplished by any government health institution accredited by the Department of Health

Nominees or interested applicants are requested to submit the requirements not later than 24 May 2005 to:

DR. CRISTINA DAMASCO PADOLINA
Commissioner, CHED and
Chair, Screening and Selection Committee for the MSU Presidency
Commission on Higher Education
5/F DAP Bldg., San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. (02) 638-4870

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Telefax: Nr 421-2327; 911-6001 loc. 6592
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Re-Bidding)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Marine Engineering Upgrade of Three (3) Jacinto Class Patrol Vessels (JCPV)** of the Philippine Navy. It has an approved budget of **Three Hundred Fifty Four Million Pesos (Php354,000,000.00)**, chargeable against the AFP Modernization Program CY 2002 funds.

The bid documents shall be available for issuance starting **April 20, 2005** until **May 16, 2005** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Program Management Office, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo (CGEA), Quezon City. The bid documents shall be issued upon payment of a registration fee amounting to **Thirty Five Thousand Pesos (Php35,000.00)**, which is not refundable. The form of payment shall be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder, authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of said documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference for the first stage bidding is scheduled on **May 3, 2005, 9:00 AM** (local time) at the Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are encouraged to submit their query/ies, if any, in writing to the BAC Secretariat prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

The Bidder shall be allowed to inspect the three (3) JCPVs at the Cavite Naval Shipyard, Naval Base Cavite, Fort San Felipe, Cavite City upon purchase of bid documents until the deadline of submission of the bids.

Deadline for submission of bids of the 1st stage bidding is on **May 17, 2005 9:00 AM** (local time) and followed immediately by the opening of bids on the same day at the Silid Panday Pira.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids based on the grounds for disqualification specified in RA 9184 without assuming any obligation whatsoever for expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

(Original Signed)
VICE ADMIRAL ARISTON V DELOS REYES AFP
Vice Chairman, DND-BAC

(PDI–April 20 & 27, 2005)

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525-1825 / 522-4226
Email: cenmar@avcorner.com
cenmar@eastern.com

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Department of Health
Center for Health Development – V
BICOL MEDICAL CENTER
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Naga City
☎ 811-7802 loc. 36 • 473-8936; 473-2334

April 18, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

No. 2005-08 s. 2005

1. The Bicol Medical Center (BMC) invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders who are qualified to participate in the following projects:
   a. *Project:* Procurement of Various Pharmaceuticals
      Approved Budget for the Contract: SIXTEEN MILLION ONE HUNDRED FORTY SEVEN THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE PESOS & 40/100 (PhP16,147,975.40)
      Release of Bid Documents: April 18 to May 5, 2005
      Cost of Bid Documents: PhP2,000.00
      Pre-Bid Conference: May 5, 2005 9:00 A.M. BMC Library
      Bid Opening: May 17, 2005 9:00 A.M. BMC Library
   b. *Project:* Procurement of Medical, Surgical and Dental Supplies
      Approved Budget for the Contract: FOUR MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED SEVEN THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED SIXTY EIGHT PESOS (PhP4,807,268.00)
      Release of Bid Documents: April 18 to May 4, 2005
      Cost of Bid Documents: PhP2,000.00
      Pre-Bid Conference: May 4, 2005 9:00 AM, BMC Library
      Bid Opening: May 16, 2005 9:00 AM BMC Library
2. Eligibility of prospective Bidders to participate will be based on compliance to eligibility requirements, using pass/fail non-discretionary criteria, as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA 9184), The Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), and is open to all organizations with at least sixty (60%) percent interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. The process for eligibility check is described in Clause 12 Section II of the Instructions to Bidders. In accordance with the IRR-A of RA 9184, only those Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check shall be opened and the Purchase Order (PO) awarded to the Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid, provided the Bidder concerned passes the post qualification process.
3. Interested Bidders who wish to inspect the Bidding Documents and obtain further information should contact the BAC Secretariat c/o Supply Section, Bicol Medical Center, Naga City, Telephone No. 473-2334; 473-89-36, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents per project may be purchased upon submission of a written application to the following address:

   Dr. RODOLFO C. URSUA
   Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
   Bicol Medical Center
   Naga City

5. Bids must be delivered to the above address on the specified date and time per project. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount of at least equal to, and not lower than, a percentage of the approved budget, in any of the following forms/terms:
   a) Cash, certified check, cashier's/manager's check, Bank draft, or irrevocable letter of credit – One Percent (1%)
   b) Bank Guarantee – One & A Half Percent (1-1/2%)
   c) GSIS Surety Bond – Two & A Half Percent (2-1/2%)
6. The BMC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to issuance of the Award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) *RODOLFO C. URSUA, MD, FPCS, FPUA*
Medical Specialist II and Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–April 21 & 27, 2005)

Restaurant, male entertainment Bar
Opens at 8pm to 4am

Cover Boy *Bar* and Restaurant

Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard Sta. Mesa, Manila
Second Floor, 3160 Alcar Building D. Ampil Street
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0927-585-6309

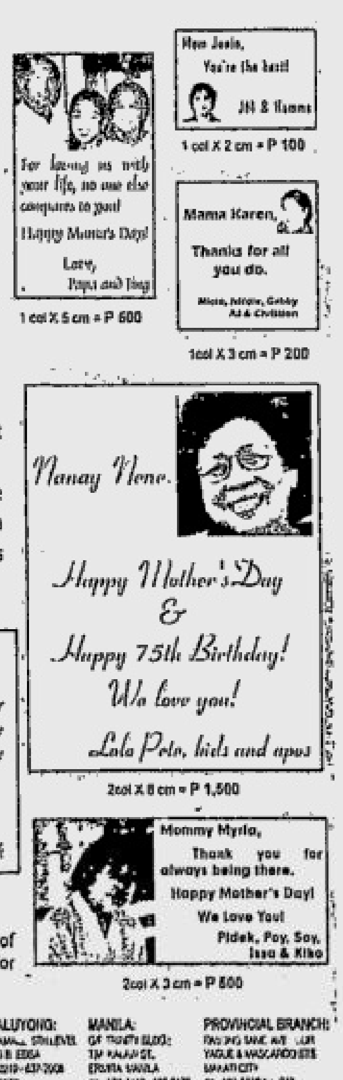
Palscon holds 18th Anniversary Rites

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Local Service Contractors, Inc., the organization of legitimate, labor compliant service contractors agencies will hold its 18th anniversary celebration last April 21 at 12 to 4 p.m. at the Gabaldon Room of Club Filipino in Greenhills, City of San Juan, Metro Manila. Speakers include Dole-NCR Director Ricardo Martinez, Ecop Director General Lawyer Vicente Leogardo Jr., and former Dean of UP College of Law, Lawyer Froilan M. Bacungan. The affair was grace by the past presidents of Palscon and the officers of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines headed by its president Lina A. Aseneta.

Philippine Daily Inquirer
MESSAGEBOARD

Mother's Day Treat

Warm your mom's heart with your deeply felt love note telling her how special she is to you. On May 8, Mother's Day, **INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS**, the widest reaching classifieds, will highlight a "Mother's Day special section" for personal ads dedicated to the first woman in all our lives.



Take advantage of this offer and this will surely be one of the **BEST** gifts your mom will ever receive and cherish. For more info, you may visit or call any Inquirer branch.

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PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
SALE OF ASSETS

The assets are being offered on an "as-is, where-is" basis, at the Indicative Prices presented below. Sealed bids/offers shall be received at 3:00 p.m. on the following schedules at PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

1. PUBLIC BIDDING

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (In Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Radio Philippine Network (RPN) Various machinery and equipment, furniture and office equipment located at Broadcast City, Diliman, Quezon City	P106,714.00	May 10, 2005

2. OFFER FOR SALE

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (In Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Atlas Development and Steel Industries, Inc. Land, buildings and improvements located at Jenny's Avenue, Rosario, Pasig City	P26,945,000.00	May 12, 2005
Davao Timber Corp. Land (11,948 sq.m.) and all improvements thereon located along Binuangan, Maco, Compostela Valley Province	P1,549,000.00	May 17, 2005

Interested parties may secure the sale documents from the PMO Marketing Dept. at non-refundable fees of P300.00 for RPN, P500.00 for Atlas and P500.00 for Davao Timber.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department.

For more information, please contact the PMO Marketing Dept. at telephone nos. 817-6331; 817-8762; 818-4733; 892-21-45 fax no. 818-0906.

(PDI–April 27, 28 & 29, 2005)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Manila, Philippines

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee – Head Office, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites BSP/G-EPS registered companies/contractors and other interested suppliers to a public bidding for:

One (1) year contract for the supply of manpower, equipment, tools and supplies for the janitorial, sanitation, maintenance and other related services for the BSP Main and Security Plant Complexes including general cleaning and maintenance of carpets and upholstered furniture (for the BSP Main Complex only) per BSP Special Terms and Conditions.

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): P38,694,000.00/year.

Bid documents are available from **20 April 2005** to **10 May 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P19,000.00 at the following:

BAC Secretariat
Rm. 212, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Building
cor. A. Mabini and P. Ocampo Sr. Sts., Malate, Manila
Tel. No(s). 524-8718/536-5985

Pre-Bid Conference Date and Time: **13 May 2005 at 9:00 A.M.**
Bidding Date and Time: **25 May 2005**, not later than 10:00 A.M.
Place: Room MR2A, 2nd Floor, 5-storey Building, BSP Main Complex, Malate, Manila

Interested bidders shall submit not later than the bidding date and time the following documents in three (3) separate envelopes:

Envelope No. 1:

1. Articles of Incorporation and Business Registration Papers.
2. Y2003 Audited Financial Statements (Income Statement & Balance Sheet).
3. Y2003 Income Tax Returns duly stamped/received by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) or its Authorized Agent Bank or a Certified True Copy of Y2003 Income Tax Return issued by the Revenue District Officer of the BIR concerned (for electronic filing).
4. Valid and current Mayor's Permit/Municipal License.
5. Prospective bidder's computation for its Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) which shall be at least equal to the ABC, duly signed by the authorized signing official and supported with pertinent documents, i.e., financial statements and copies of on-going project contracts; or a commitment from a licensed bank to extend to it a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid; or a certification from the bank stating that the bidder has a cash deposit with a holding period of at least one (1) month from date of bidding. The commitment or deposit certificate shall be in an amount not lower than 10% of the ABC. The NFCC shall be computed as follows: NFCC = [(Current Assets – Current Liabilities) (K)] minus value of all outstanding projects: K=10.
6. Sworn statement that the prospective bidder is not blacklisted from bidding in any Government Office, Agency, Corporation.
7. Letter authorizing the BAC or its duly authorized representative to verify any or all of the documents submitted for eligibility check.
8. Sworn certification by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative that each of the documents submitted is an original copy or a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original.
9. Affidavit of the prospective bidder that he or she or any officer of the corporation is not related to the head of the procuring entity by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree.
10. Sworn statement that the prospective bidder shall provide all the cleaning equipment and supplies indicated in the Special Terms and Conditions.
11. List of clients including addresses, telephone numbers and contact persons to show proof that the prospective bidder has at least five (5) years experience in janitorial, sanitation, maintenance and other related services.
12. Copies of at least three (3) existing contracts for similar requirement with a total monthly billing of at least P1,000,000.00 for the three (3) contracts.
13. DOLE (NCR) and NLRC certifications that the prospective bidder has no pending case.
14. SSS certification that the prospective bidder has regularly remitted contributions of its employees as of 31 March 2005.

Envelope No. 2:

1. Instructions to Bidders
2. Duly accomplished Certification/Undertaking
3. Original Bid Security

Envelope No. 3:

Price Proposal with attached cost breakdown.

All envelopes shall be dropped in the bid box located at MR2A, 2nd Floor, BSP Main Complex.
LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

The BSP assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI–April 27, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Land Reform
Foreign Assisted Projects Office
Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project II
CENTRAL PROJECT OFFICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Land Reform (DLR), has received an ODA loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation, herein referred to as JBIC, towards the cost of Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project Phase II (ARISP II), and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan in the total amount of Twenty Three Million Two Hundred Twenty Five Thousand and 0/100 Pesos (P23,225,000.00) to payments under contract of procurement of equipment.

The DAR Foreign-Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO), Pre-qualifications, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) is inviting contractors to pre-qualify and bid for the following equipment:

152 sets of desktop computers;

27 units of Laptop computers; and

76 units LCD

JBIC requires that the bidders and contractors, as well as the Government of the Philippines-Department of Land Reform, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA loan and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contract. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:

1. will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt and fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
2. will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA if it any time determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA loan or other Japanese ODA.

Interested eligible parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids using Two Envelope System.

- List of Eligibility requirements shall be available for issuance on 09 May 2005;
- Closing date and time for submission of eligibility requirements shall be on 20 May 2005; 12:00 P.M., Manila Time; Pre-equal Assessment, Evaluation & Inspection of sites; 1:30 P.M., Manila
- Letter of Notice to Prospective Bidders shall be issued on 25 May 2005;
- Bid documents shall be issued to Pre-qualified Bidders on 27 May 2005-06 June 2005, upon presentation of valid Notification Letter and payment of non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00);
- Closing date and time of submission of bids is 22 June 2005 at 9:00 A.M. Bids will be opened in the presence of participating bidders on the same day at 9:30 A.M., Manila.

All documents pertaining to the tender are available at DLR-FAPsO, Administrative Unit, 2nd Floor, FAPsO Building, Department of Land Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

The above types of equipment is considered as one lot. The DLR will not entertain bidders bidding for only one or two types of equipment

The DLR reserves the right to reject any, or accept the offer most advantageous to the Government, and annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without hereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **GERUNDIO "KHALIQ" C. MADUEÑO**
Undersecretary

(PDI - April 27 & May 5, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LICENSE FOR PRIVATE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT AGENCY

PRPA OPERATOR'S LICENSE NO. M-03-04-221

☐ New ☒ Renewal (Previous License Number M-01-03-183

TIN NO.

By authority vested in me by the Labor Code and the Omnibus Rules Implementing the Code, and payment of the license fee in the amount of SIX THOUSAND PESOS (P6,000.00) ONLY having been made as per Official Receipt Number 6548064 dated October 30, 2003 and posting of the appropriate cash and surety bonds of P25,000.00 and P100,000.00 respectively having been complied with this LICENSE is hereby granted to Ms. Nerissa S. Reyes to establish, direct and/or manage the

ASIA PARTNERSHIP PHILIPPINES, INC.
Unit 1606 16th Floor, Tower I Building
Ayala Avenue, Makati City

This license which expires on May 7, 2005 is valid only in the Philippines.

Transfer or use by any other person or entity tenders this license null and void

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of National Capital Region, Department of Labor and Employment to be affixed at the City of Manila Philippines, this 10th day of October 2003.

(Sgd.) **CIRIACO A. LAGUNSAD III**
Acting Regional Director

(PDI – April 27, 2005)

PASEGURUHAN NG MGA NAGLILINGKOD SA PAMAHALAAN
(Government Service Insurance System)
Laguna Branch Office
Brgy. Biñan, Pagsanjan, Laguna 4009

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
(JANITORIAL AND SECURITY SERVICES)
FOR GSIS LAGUNA FIELD OFFICE BUILDING
PAGSANJAN, LAGUNA

1. The Government Service Insurance System, through the approved Corporate Budget (Assets & Facilities Maintenance – GSIS Laguna Field Office) for CY 2005, intends to apply the sum of TWO MILLION SIX HUNDRED SEVENTY ONE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P2,671,000.00), being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ONE LOT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (JANITORIAL AND SECURITY SERVICES) FOR GSIS LAGUNA FIELD OFFICE BUILDING, PAGSANJAN, LAGUNA. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.
2. The Government Service Insurance Systems now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for ONE LOT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (JANITORIAL AND SECURITY SERVICES) FOR GSIS LAGUNA FIELD OFFICE BUILDING, PAGSANJAN, LAGUNA. Delivery of the Property Management Services is required from September 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) Laguna Field Office, and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P1,000.00. The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The GSIS Laguna Field Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on June 3, 2005, 1:00 pm at the Multi-Purpose Hall, 3rd level, GSIS Laguna Field Office Building, Biñan, Pagsanjan, Laguna.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before June 15, 2005, 1:00 pm. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms:

FORM OF BIDS SECURITY	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to Bid
Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One Percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half Percent (1 1/2%)
Surety Bond	Two and a half Percent (2 1/2%)
Foreign Government Guarantee	One Hundred Percent (100%)

and in the amount at least equal to, and not lower than, a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid, or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be on June 15, 2005, 1:30 pm at the Multi-Purpose Hall, 3rd Level, GSIS Laguna Field Office Building, Biñan, Pagsanjan, Laguna.. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The GSIS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Nellie S. Camo, CESO V
Field Operations Manager
Name of Officer

GSIS Laguna Field Office
Name of Office

Brgy. Biñan, Pagsanjan, Laguna
Postal/Street Address

049-8086960 & 049-8086055
Telefax Number

(Sgd.) **NELLIE S. CAMO, CESO V**
Field Operations Manager
BAC Chairman

(PDI – April 27 & May 4, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Western Visayas College of Science and Technology
La Paz, Iloilo City
• Telefax : (033) 329-4274 • Email: wvcst@eudoramail.com

Cert. No. 01/0835 Reg. No. 059-A

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 123rd BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING ON MARCH 10, 2005 AT 4:40 p.m. HELD AT THE BOARD ROOM, WVCST, ILOILO CITY

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, this resolution was adopted by the WVCST Board of Trustees, thus:

RESOLUTION NO. WVCST BOT 3/10/2005-18-A

RESOLVE, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that after full deliberation on the matter, the WVCST Board of Trustees **apporved** the **NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS,** to wit:

The **BOARD OF TRUSTEES** of the Western Visayas College of Science and Technology formally and publicly announces that the **Search for WVCST President** is now open. The Board, by virtue of the powers vested upon it by Republic Act 8292, has determined the following minimum qualifications for the position:

1. Preferably a holder of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.) or Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) or any earned doctoral degree in related academic fields;
2. Must have five (5) years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
3. Must be a natural born Filipino citizen with proven integrity with no pending administrative and / or criminal cases; and
4. Must be at least thirty five (35) years of age but not more than fifty five (55) years old on the date of application.

Applicants are requested to submit the following requirements:

5. Letter of Application;
6. Comprehensive Resumé supported by authenticated documents;
7. Vision and mission for the Western Visayas College of Science and Technology;
8. Birth Certificate, NBI, Ombudsman, and Police clearances; and disclosure of current and pending administrative / criminal case/s.

Applicants are requested to submit eight (8) sets of formal applications and certified support documents not later than 6:30 p.m., May 31, 2005 to:

Dr. Isabela L. Mahler
Chairperson, WVCST Search Committee for Presidency
Director IV, CHED, Region VI
Washington Street, Jaro, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 508-88-52

or through the Board Secretary, Ma. Luisa L. Binueza, Western Visayas College of Science and Technology, Burgos Street, La Paz, Iloilo City with Telefax No. (033)-329-42-74 or (033) 320-71-90, Local 103.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

I hereby certify to the authenticity and veracity of the foregoing resolution.

(Sgd.) **MA. LUISA L. BINUEZA**
Board Secretary V
3/19/05

Attested:

(Sgd.) **HJA. LUNINGNING MISUAREZ-UMAR, Ed. D.**
Chair, WVCST Board of Trustees
Commissioner, CHED

(PDI – April 27, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
OLD MIA ROAD, PASAY CITY
METRO MANILA

A Century of bringing the Filipino closer together through better transportation and communication

RE : **AMENDING THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 253 PROVIDING FOR THE EXPANSION OF AIR SERVICES TO THE DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (DMIA) AND SUBIC BAY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (SBIA).**

RESOLUTION NO. 16 (2005)

WHEREAS, in its Resolution dated March 04, 2005 the Board approved the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Executive Order (E.O.) No. 253 [issued on December 03, 2003, providing for the expansion of air services to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) and Subic Bay International Airport (SBIA)], after the same has been reviewed and finalized by the Office of the Chief Presidential Legal Counsel in accordance with the directive of the President;

WHEREAS, the Office of the Chief Presidential Legal Counsel, as per its communication dated 04 April 2005, proposed certain amendments to the IRR in order to rationalize, clarify and remove perceived ambiguities in some of its provisions, more specifically paragraphs 1.1 (second paragraph); 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3. 2.4; 2.5; 3.0; 4.0; 4.1 and 5.0 (b); and Rule II (title), in order to clearly and fully reflect the spirit and intent of E.O. 253;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board, on the basis of the recommendations of the Office of the Chief Presidential Legal Counsel, resolved to AMEND, as it hereby AMENDS paragraphs 1.1 (second paragraph); 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 3.0; 4.0; 4.1 and 5.0 (b); and Rule II (Title) of the IRR, which shall now read as follows:

1.1 x x x x

The provisions of the aforementioned Executive Order are intended to promote the expansion of air cargo services to DMIA and SBIA. Hence, these Implementing Rules and Regulations are designed to facilitate access to the aforementioned airports and shall not be interpreted, in case of ambiguity, to restrict such access;

1.2 For purposes of application and construction of these rules, the following terms shall have the meanings and definitions specified hereunder;

2.1 Foreign cargo carriers with or without authority to operate to and from DMIA and/or SBIA, or with or without existing Air Service Agreements (ASA) shall file a verified petition with the Board for an authority to engage in international air cargo transportation and/or waiver of restrictions or limitations on capacity, type of aircraft or non-cabotage traffic rights with respect to its operation to and from DMIA and/or SBIA under the provisions of E.O. 253, after furnishing all Philippine carriers engaged in international air cargo transportation with copies thereof;

2.2 The petition shall specify the routes to be operated with DMIA and/or SBIA as gateway points, the capacity to be offered on such routes on a weekly basis, the types of aircraft to be operated thereon and the start-up dates of such operation;

2.3 In determining the merits of a petition, the Board shall consider that air access to DMIA and SBIA is declared as a development route. Hence, the authority to operate such route may be granted without any restrictions on frequency or capacity, aircraft configuration and non-cabotage traffic rights, except as may otherwise be demanded by the operational, security and safety requirements for the operation of air cargo services to and from the DMIA and SBIA;

2.4 The Board shall review and assess the request of the applicant against the current operational, security and safety requirements of operating air cargo services to and from DMIA and SBIA taking into consideration comments that may have been filed by interested parties within seven (7) working days from receipt of notice;

2.5 If the Board finds that the petition is sufficient in form and substance and allowable on the basis of technical and operational requirements of operating to and from DMIA and/or SBIA, the same shall be favorably granted. Otherwise, the Board shall conduct a hearing on the petition to be completed and resolved within thirty (30) days from the date of the first hearing. During the interim, the Board may issue provisional orders for the protection of the rights of the parties;

3.0 Petitions filed by Foreign Air Carriers for authority to operate international cargo charter (Non-Scheduled) flights to and from DMIA and SBIA shall be governed by chapter III of Economic Regulation No. 2, as amended, entitled "Economic Regulation on charter flights approved by the Board on 15 September 1969";

4.0 The right to operate to and from DMIA and SBIA granted herein shall be effective for a period of five (5) years, renewable upon petition of the grantee. The petition for renewal must be filed thirty (30) days prior to the date of the expiration of the permit;

4.1 The waiver of restrictions to operate air cargo services to and from DMIA and SBIA shall be effective for a period of five (5) years renewable upon petition of the grantee. The petition for renewal must be filed within thirty (30) days prior to the date of the expiration of the waiver. The waiver shall be coterminous with the permit granted under 4.0 and the FACP issued by the Board under R.A. 776; and

5.0 (b) Application/Renewal of waiver of restrictions; Php75,000.00; and

RULE II AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AND APPLICATION FOR WAIVER

04 April 2005.
Pasay City, Philippines

x----------x

USEC. EDWARD HARUN V. PAGUNSAN
Alternate Chairman

ASST. SEC. NILO C. JATICO
Vice Chairman

ATTY. FLORENTINO M. HERRERA III
Member

Attested by:

ATTY. CARMELO L. ARCILLA
Deputy Executive Director
(Acting Board Secretary)

(PDI-April 27, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce to all interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction of 200,000 MT or 4.0-Million bags 5% and 15% brokens Imported Rice 2005 Arrivals.

PARTICULARS	VOLUME (IN MT)	INDICATIVE PRICE	5% BROKENS	15% BROKENS
Farmer's Organizations	40,000	Ex-vessel	P1,026.00	P 970.00/bag
Retailers	40,000	Ex-warehouse	P1,076.00	P 1,010.00/bag
Open to all interested buyers	120,000			

The pre-auction conference and auction proper shall be held at 10:00 AM at FDC Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila on the following dates or until the whole volume for auction has been sold/exhausted:

Pre-Auction Conference	Auction Proper
May 2, 2005	May 6, 2005

All interested bidders/buyers are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling)
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Metro Manila

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting May 3, 2005 at DMO OCD, 5th floor National Food Authority, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Q.C. from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For any inquiries, please contact Esperanza Tecson tel. nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

Bid documents will be available on May 3, 2005 to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000 for FO's/Retailers and P5,000.00 for all interested buyers.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **CONRADO DL. IBANEZ**
Assistant Administrator and
Chairman, Disposition

(PDI – April 27 & 29, 2005)

PMAP seminar, workshop

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a seminar on Competency Career Development Workshop scheduled on April 28-29. This 2-day workshop is a completely hands-on learning activity which heightens the individual awareness of the value of a competency based career and individual development planning.

A four-day workshop on Essential of Human Resource Management scheduled on May 2-5. Registration fee is P8,500 for PMAP Members and P10,000 for Non PMAP Members. This course aims to provide participants with a theoretical foundation as well as a perspective from which to view the overall human resource management function as it is integrated with the total corporate function. HR Executive Series on ROI of Human Capital is scheduled on May 5-6, which will be held at Dusit Hotel Nikko. Registration fee is P14,000 for PMAP Members and P15,000 for Non PMAP Center. The program aims the participants to acquire the knowledge and the skills to align the HR system to the business vision-mission-values, goals and strategy and to set up measurable performance objectives.

For reservations, please contact The Human Resource Management Development Center at telephone numbers 726-1581; 726-1588 or 726-1532; email address: maylene.gatdula@pmap.org.ph or you may visit the website: www.pmap.org.ph

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OBITUARIES

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

CORAZON LAZATIN PECSON

who peacefully joined her Creator on April 5, 2005

wish to convey our sincere gratitude and appreciation to those who in various ways expressed their condolences during our time of bereavement

Your kindness has been a source of strength and much comfort.
May the good Lord bless you.

Losing our mother,

Dra. Lydia S. Reyes,

was one of the most trying moments of our lives.

Thank You

To all the relatives and friends who imparted gestures of sympathy, those who offered beautiful flowers and mass cards, and those who were with us and lifted up our spirits.

We shall forever be grateful to all of you.

husband, Antonio (Abing)
children Arlan and Tina
Arvin

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
2 Corinthians 5:4-5

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever..." **Psalm 41:13**

ATTY. DIOSDADO "DADO" M. MENDOZA, SR.

Has peacefully joined his Creator on April 25, 2005 at the age of 73.

His beloved wife **LICINIA "ISING" V. MENDOZA**

CHILDREN
PETER VAL & MARGE MENDOZA
CONNIE & ANTHONY YOUNG
TINA & JOEY FIGUEROA
DIOSDADO MENDOZA, JR.
JOP & JHUN JASA, JR.
RIZA & MANNY PUSO

GRANDCHILDREN
Madison, Paula and Macmac
Kiko
John, Mark and Matthew

JT, Jamico and Jon-Daniel
Nico and Pauline

relatives and friends request prayers for his everlasting joy in the company of the angels and the saints.

His body lies in state at the Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City until noon of Friday, April 29, 2005; and will be transferred to St. Gabriel Church, San Gabriel, Sta. Maria, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 30, 2005 at the St. Gabriel Memorial Park, San Gabriel, Sta. Maria, Bulacan after the 9:00 a.m. requiem Mass.

The Management and Staff of
Kepner-Tregoe Philippines / Manila Execon Group Inc.
sympathize with the family of

Dr. Benjamin B. Tregoe, Jr.

Co-founder and Chairman Emeritus
of Kepner-Tregoe, Inc., Princeton, N.J.,
who passed away on April 20, 2005. He was 77.

He is survived by his wife, **Jeannette Tregoe**; daughters, **Cynthia Richetti** and **Elizabeth Gonzalez**; and son, **Benjamin Tregoe III**; and two grandchildren, **Kaleigh** and **Gavin Richetti**.

A memorial service was held at the Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton, NJ on Monday, April 25th.

The partners and staff of
Joaquin Cunanan & Co./PricewaterhouseCoopers Philippines
announce with deep sorrow the untimely demise of our
dearly loved

Alicia Ducut Ramos

Former Senior Finance Manager

Alice peacefully joined our Creator on April 22, 2005
at the age of 49.

Her loving parents **Catalino and Adelina**;
siblings **Nenet** and **Romy**; **Susan** and **Doro**; **Janet**; **Lalaine**; **Glynis** and **Tony**; **Liezel** and **Ronnie**; **Marites**; **Eddie** and **Paz**; nieces **Marjorie**, **J-Ann**, **May-May**, **Sandra**, **Angel**, and **Trisha**; and nephews **Cliff**, **Glenn**, **Christian**, **Edgar**, **J-J**, **JP**, **PJ**, **Ron-ron**, and **Harry**
request everyone to join in praying
for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her remains lie in state at the 2nd Floor Premier Suite I
Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Necrological services will be given
at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City
on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 after the 6:00 p.m. Mass.

Interment will be held on Thursday, April 28, 2005
after the 9:00 a.m. requiem Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park
Dr. A. Santos Avenue (formerly Sucat Road), Parañaque City.

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Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 57 on March 19, 2005 at Torrance Memorial Medical Center, LA CA, would like to invite all his former Classmates & Officemates, Friends, Relatives and those who knew and loved him.

"To a 40th Day Mass Celebration" on Thursday, April 28, 2005 at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati at 12:15 Noon.

Missed by his loving wife **Angelica**; children **Laurence, Cheryl & Kyle Reuter, Joyce**; Stepchildren: **Geraldine & James, Rich**; Mother-in-law: **Matilde Cruz vda. de Flores**; sisters and brothers-in-law: **Evelyn & Antonio Lustre, Joy & Ramon Arcega**; nieces and nephews.

"And the time has come for my departure, I have finished the good fight, I have finished the race, I kept the Faith."
2 Timothy 4:6-7

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BUSINESS

DOF backs 32% tax on self-employed

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has backed a proposal in Congress to impose a uniform 32-percent income tax on self-employed individuals, a move that will put them in the same league as corporate taxpayers.

A DOF official said imposing one tax rate on individuals running their own businesses or exercising a profession would help improve the government's weak revenue collection from the sector.

Self-employed individuals, such as entertainers, lawyers and doctors, are currently imposed varying income tax rates ranging from 5 percent to 32 percent, depending on the income.

They are also allowed to deduct expenses—including personal ones—from their gross earnings to determine their taxable income.

But under House Bill No. 3826, which calls for a simplified net income tax system (SNITS) for the self-employed, individuals engaged in business or practice of profession will be imposed a uniform income tax rate of 32 percent.

Their allowable deductions will also be limited to direct business costs, similar with those of corporate taxpayers.

The allowable deductions stated under the bill, filed by House committee on ways and means chair Rep. Jesli Lapus, include: expenses for salaries of employees, telecommunications services, electricity, fuel, light and water, depreciation of capital equipment, contributions made to government and accredited relief organizations for the rehabilitation of calamity-stricken areas declared by the President, and interest paid or accrued within a taxable year on loan contracted from accredited financial institutions.

The finance official said limiting the allowable deductions for self-employed individuals was one way of addressing delinquency.

Latest figures from the Bureau of Internal Revenue showed that self-employed individuals only contribute 2.6 percent to the total government collection of individual income tax.

The bulk, or 97.4 percent, comes from fixed-income earners.

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5.0MM - 9,999,999	6.000	6.250	6.375	6.500
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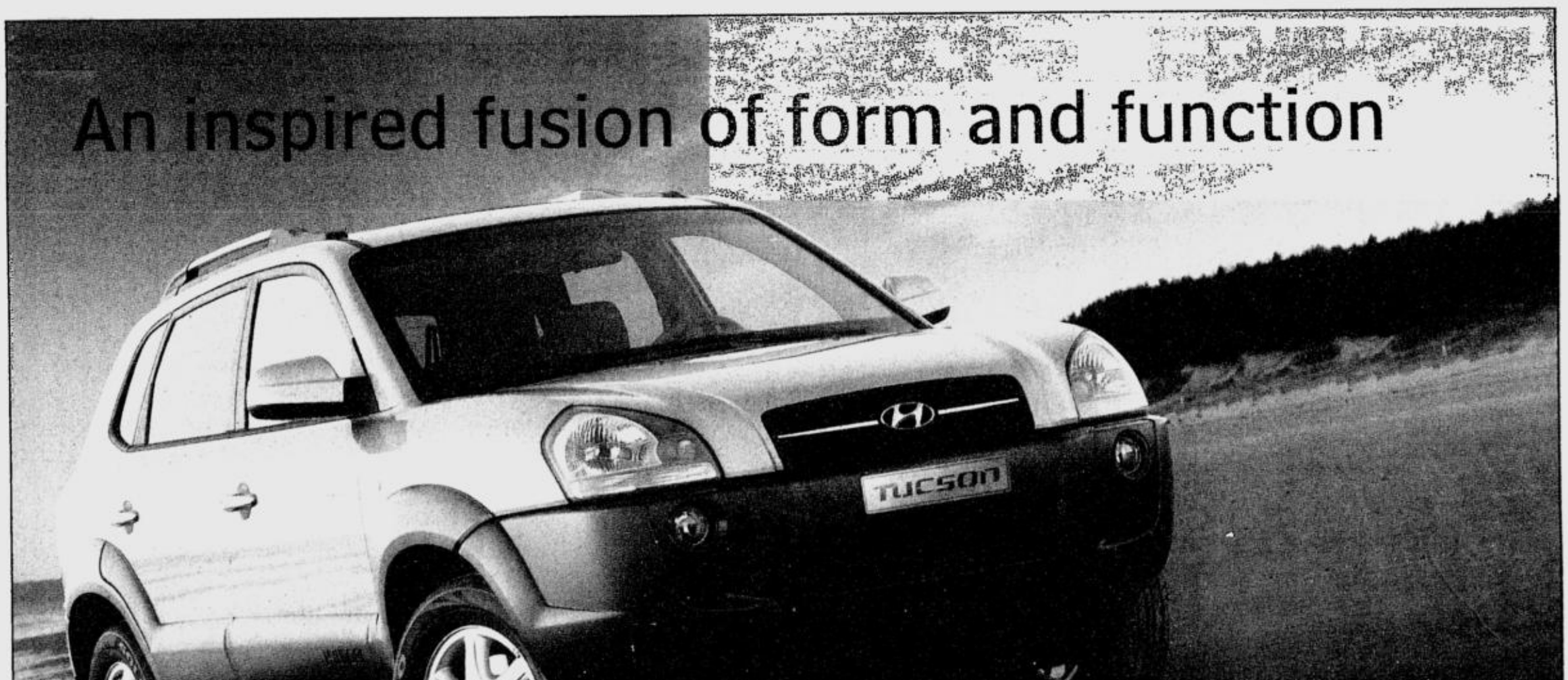

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ON RP ROADS REPORT

'Take it into context,' urges LTO chief

By Tessa R. Salazar

GLOBAL advocacy group Safe Kids Worldwide, a non-government organization, released a report last week identifying Philippine roads as among the deadliest in Asia.

Among the factors identified contributing to this assessment were the almost nonexistent sidewalks on roads leading to schools, speed limits not enforced and many motorists not respecting pedestrians' right of way.

A lot of factors

When asked for a reaction, Land Transportation Office traffic safety education chief Daisy Jacobo said the public should stop blaming the situation entirely on the enforcement of traffic laws.

"A lot of factors should be involved while analyzing the data, such as economic reasons, and situate it in that context," she said.

A tangible result of economic causes would be that more children spend more time in the streets. "It could mean more children are ex-

TAKE/ C4

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

The true POWER of Hyundai's CRDi: Common Rail Direct Injection Diesel Engine

Solution to Fuel Problems

With the rising prices of gasoline in the world's fuel market, today's motorists look for an alternative to aid their already ailing wallets. Gasoline has rocketed to as much as P30 per liter. P500, a few years back could have suffice for a full tank for many cars. Now, that could not even last a week's worth of gasoline. Diesel, although it has been around for the longest time, has still remained a more affordable alternative to gasoline. Diesel has excellent air-fuel compression and better fuel efficiency than gasoline, kilometer per kilometer. The preferred choice by truckers and heavy-loaders, diesel engines provide better pulling power than gasoline engines. The main problem was that the stigma of diesel engines being noisy and dirty in car emissions.

Little have we known that the problem has already been solved. Asia is still one of the few regions that are still highly dependent on gasoline-power. US and Europe, with the highest environmental safety standard, have been using for years now hybrid diesel engines that ensure less noise output and minimize gas emission.

And now, Hyundai introduces their innovation of hybrid diesel engines: the CRDi technology or Common Rail Direct Injection Diesel Engine technology in the Starex, Matrix and Tucson (pronounced: 'tü-"sän). Taking up the challenge, Hyundai was able to further minimize the noise vibration and harshness factors of diesel, while maximizing power.

CRDi diesel engine technology is a great help to today's cost-conscious motorists. This breakthrough engine delivers optimum performance and fuel efficiency, while minimizing maintenance costs and engine wear and tear. The result is diesel engines that are less expensive to operate. Hyundai is one of the few firsts to implement the use of the CRDi technology in Asia.

A Proud Innovation Recognized Around the World

Invented in 1997, the common rail was a new kind of fuel injection system which revolutionized the European motoring standards as all major European carmakers began to implement it into their vehicles.

Using a single rail to run the length of the engine allows high-pressure fuel to course into each cylinder. The electronic system monitors and accurately distributes the precise amount of fuel needed to achieve maximum engine combustion efficiency. Thus, this system enables CRDi-equipped diesel cars to have fast, gasoline–like acceleration and response while significantly consuming less fuel.

The sophisticated on-board computer monitors and adjusts a wide range of engine functions. The adjustable injector heads that feed a precise amount of fuel to the engine optimizes power while minimizing burnt emission and pollution. The CRDi brings diesel engines to the point that it surpasses gasoline engines. Combining high-torque and fuel efficiency, the CRDi is faster and easier to maintain with smoother, quieter operation with less emission. A technology worth placing into high-end models and sedans.

The Tale of the Tapes

Taking three commonly used engines, let's see how they fare to the CRDi. Aspirated Diesel Engines (Common Diesel Engines) old and rickety well known to be slow, bulky, fuel-guzzlers were created half a century ago, improved by the introduction of a turbo charger to improve the air density inside the combustion chamber (Turbo Diesel Engines) resulting in a slight 5 to 15% boost of power. Coupled with an intercooler (Turbo Charged Intercooler Diesel Engine) for extra air density the TCI produced 20% more power than Turbo engines.

The CRDi already delivers excellent fuel efficiency and when combined with a turbo intercooler and a precise computer system enhances every aspect of the engine. Power went up to 40% higher than the TCI engine, 75% higher than the Turbo engine and 100% higher than normal aspirated diesel engines.

The evolution the diesel engine has gone through great changes, and the pinnacle of this, at present, is the CRDi technology, that improves power and fuel economy in diesel engines.

Truly, the Hyundai CRDi has come a long way to bring a new age of fuel-efficient vehicles to the market; a welcome innovation to an economy that needs more ways of enjoying motoring without their budget's suffering. And since it is in the new Starex, Matrix and Tucson, Hyundai would always find ways for you to drive your way.

For more information regarding CRDi technology, please contact or visit your nearest authorized Hyundai dealers.

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BY HOLDING regular race events, SC Kymco is hoping to lessen the number of riders engaging in illegal motorcycle street racing.

Providing safer venue for motorcycle racers

Text and photo by Charles E. Buban

CLANDESTINE—and therefore illegal—motorcycle racing has regularly been in the news, with deadly crashes making tabloid headlines.

Despite the warnings, injuries and even deaths, the practice continues to attract participants and spectators, thus becoming one of law enforcement's worst problems.

In almost every accident, the individuals involved are always noted as stating that they were just trying to drive like their favorite rider or movie character.

"Stories and news articles are starting to fill the papers about such incidences. Whenever I have a chance, I always send this message out: Racing illegally in the streets leaves too many elements open to set up a disaster," reminds SC Kymco Pilipinas VP for operations Gilbert Limjoco.

Organizing race event

It was this idea that Limjoco and SC Kymco decided five years ago to organize an annual race event that would invite their customers and even riders using other brand of motorcycles to show their wares in a much safer environment.

"The Kymco Cup is not just an annual event conducted by the company to thank its dealers, riders and owners nationwide. We want these illegal racers to reconsider what they are doing. We want them to realize that there are venues—be it drag racing or motorcycle racing—designed just for them who are racing on the streets and who are putting at risk their lives and that of others on the road," says Limjoco.

Indeed, racers participating in this year's Kymco Cup welcomed the exciting road course prepared for them around the Filinvest Corporate City grounds in Alabang.

Improving each year

"Every year, they have something to look forward to. It was great to note that participation, together with awareness, is improving each year, with racers saying it's nice to be able to race in a safe place, without having to worry about the police," shares Limjoco.

With the support of Filinvest Alabang Inc., Batangas Country Club, The Manila Motor Show and Inside Racing magazine, this year's race included nine categories: AXR 110, Activ 110, Dink 150, Top Boy 100, Spike 125, Open Expert Scooter, Open Expert Underbone, 50 cc Scooter Multibrand and Media Fun Race.

Leading the list of winners of the 5th Annual Kymco Cup was Nathaniel Enriquez who won in the AXR Motard category, SC Kymco's latest product offering.

Other winners

In other categories, Ogie Callanga dominated the Top Boy 100 class, who also won the Spike 125 class.

Mark Christian Reyes topped the Dink 150 class while Mark Vidallo won the Activ 110 class.

Mark Chua bested the Open Expert Scooter class while veteran rider Jolet Jao dominated the Open Expert Underbone class.

The 50cc Scooter Multibrand Scooter race went to Arnold Tejada.

Another highlight

Another highlight of the event was the Media Fun Race where members of the motoring media got a chance to race against the clock with the winners determined by their best time around the road course.

In the event, it was Inside Racing magazine's Richie Abrina who took the top honor with his 44-seconds lap time. He was followed by Philippine Tribune's Bam Olivares who clocked 45-seconds and Philippine Star's Lester Dizon, who finished the course in 48 seconds.

"We hope this annual race event will inspire more motorcycle riders out there to become more responsible. If they really have a need to race, then seek out your local racing series or help organize one," advises Limjoco.

A member of the Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association, the Taiwan-based SC Kymco is an active promoter of campaigns highlighting intelligent riding, racing safety and rider camaraderie.

AAP's 74th general membership meeting tomorrow

AUTOMOBILE Association Philippines (AAP), the national auto club of the Philippines, will hold its 74th anniversary celebration and general membership meeting at 4 p.m. tomorrow at the Valle Verde Country Club in Pasig City.

Executive Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita will be the guest speaker.

Augusto C. Lagman, who as incumbent vice president assumed the presidency of AAP after the untimely death of then AAP president Antonio L. Mapa Sr. in a road accident last March 3, will deliver the highlights of the AAP president's report after the speech of Ermita.

New board members

The canvassing of ballots and proclamation of AAP board members for the year 2005-2006 will be followed by the traditional raffle draw for major prizes. AAP members are requested to bring their AAP ID cards plus another valid ID with photo, such as driver's license, to speed up registration for the event.

This year's general membership meeting is especially significant since AAP will celebrate its diamond jubilee next year with the theme "75 Years of Serving the Filipino Motorist."

RP's oldest motoring club

AAP, formerly known as the Philippine Motor Association, is the country's oldest motoring club and the only one affiliated with the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile). As such, it is the governing body for all four-wheel motor sport competitions in the country and oversees the implementation of FIA racing rules with emphasis on the safety of participants and spectators.

AAP is also the only organization authorized to issue international driving permits. Last year, it signed an agreement with the Manila North Tollways Corp., to tow, recover and extend other emergency roadside services to all users of the newly rehabilitated North Luzon Expressway (NLEX). AAP members are entitled to free emergency roadside service at the NLEX as well as in Metro Manila.

Apart from its main office at 683 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City, AAP has branch offices in Makati City, Cebu City and Davao City with driving academies in Quezon City, Cebu and soon, Davao.

ALVIN UY

THE TF105 displayed at the Manila Motor Show is the same as the one driven by Toyota's Jarno Trulli to two second place finishes at the first three Formula One races this year.

The present perfect at the Manila Motor Show

WHERE are you going tomorrow? If you love cars like I do, you will, like me, go to the Manila Motor Show that opens tomorrow at 10 a.m.

Unlike last weekend's Trans Sport Show that focused mainly on restored vintage and classic cars, the first Manila Motor Show will showcase the present perfect—the latest new models plus a preview of an upcoming new car. With the April 28-30, 2005 Manila Motor Show, event organizer Worldbex Services International aims to put Manila on the map of must-see international motor shows and give the Philippine automotive industry a badly needed shot in the arm.

FORD'S WRC-inspired Focus rally car will attract motor sport fans. ALVIN UY

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

The 2,500 square-meter floor area of the World Trade Center on Roxas Boulevard will be filled with the newest offerings of 23 car marqués: Audi, BMW, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, Ford, Honda, Hummer, Hyundai, Isuzu, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, Mazda, Maserati, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Peugeot, Porsche, Ssangyong, Toyota and Volvo.

Coty winners

A special section will display all the category winners of the recently concluded Car of the Year (Coty) Awards with the 2004 Car of the Year Philippines, the Honda Accord V6, as the centerpiece. This is an offshoot of the agreement signed by Worldbex and Coty organizer Car Awards Group Inc. last year to jive their respective annual events in a joint effort to boost the growth of the automotive industry and thereby spur the country's economic development.

Another Coty winner, the 2004 North American Car of the Year Chrysler 300C, will make its public debut at the Manila Motor Show. The large, award-winning 300C sedan is powered by a 5.7-liter Hemi (Hemispheric) V8 engine that produces 340 max horsepower.

After admiring the Coty winners, Manila Motor Show visitors—particularly motor sport fans—will naturally gravitate toward the Toyota Formula One race car that will be exhibited and Ford's WRC-inspired Focus rally car. Toyota has reason to show off its F1 car. For the first time since Toyota entered F1 racing, it is on a winning streak with F1 driver Jarno Trulli finishing second twice in the first three F1 races this year. Trulli drove a Toyota F1 car that is the same as the one on display at the Manila Motor Show.

EIGHT generations of the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, one of the fastest cars in the world, will be displayed at the Manila Motor Show. JASON ANG

Focus

The Ford Focus, on the other hand, has been starring in World Rally Championship (WRC) events. With the preview of the Focus at the Manila Motor Show, car buffs hope that Ford Philippines will finally decide to sell the 2005 Focus locally this year instead of just exporting it. Five years in a row, the nimble, fun-to-drive Focus has made it to Car & Driver's 10 Best list. The Winter 2005 edition of Consumer Reports has also awarded the Focus its "Recommended" label.

But the latest models, Coty winners, F1 and WRC cars and sports cars like the Mazda MX-5 Miata are not all that the Manila Motor Show has to offer. For the first time under one roof, eight generations of the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution (Evo 1 to the current Evo 8), five generations of the Mercedes-Benz SL and a historical lineup of the BMW 3 Series will be displayed.

Ranked as one of the fastest cars in the world despite its prosaic price, the Evo will be on show in a special heritage section together with the Mercedes SL roadster, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year and the BMW 3 Series, which is observing its 30th anniversary this year. The Mercedes SL range begins with the 1956 190SL and ends with the current SL500 while the BMW 3 Series exhibit starts with the 1975 classic and concludes with the top-of-the-line 2005 model 330i.

THE MAZDA RX-8 with Wankel rotary engine is one of two Mazda sports cars on display at the Manila Motor Show. JASON ANG

Adventure

There is some nostalgic retrospection in the heritage section with Ford Philippines exhibiting the oldest Ford in the country, a 1930 Model A and several classic Mustangs including the original 1965 Mustang GT. But true to its "No Boundaries" tradition of adventure, Ford will also offer visitors a chance to test the all-terrain capabilities of Ford sport utility vehicles such as the Escape, Everest, Explorer and Expedition on a specially designed off-road course outdoors.

Which goes to show that the present perfect still remains as the main theme of the Manila Motor Show. By displaying the latest car models, the Manila Motor Show will create wider public awareness of the automotive industry's achievements and progress, stimulate sales and enhance projections for a brighter motoring future.

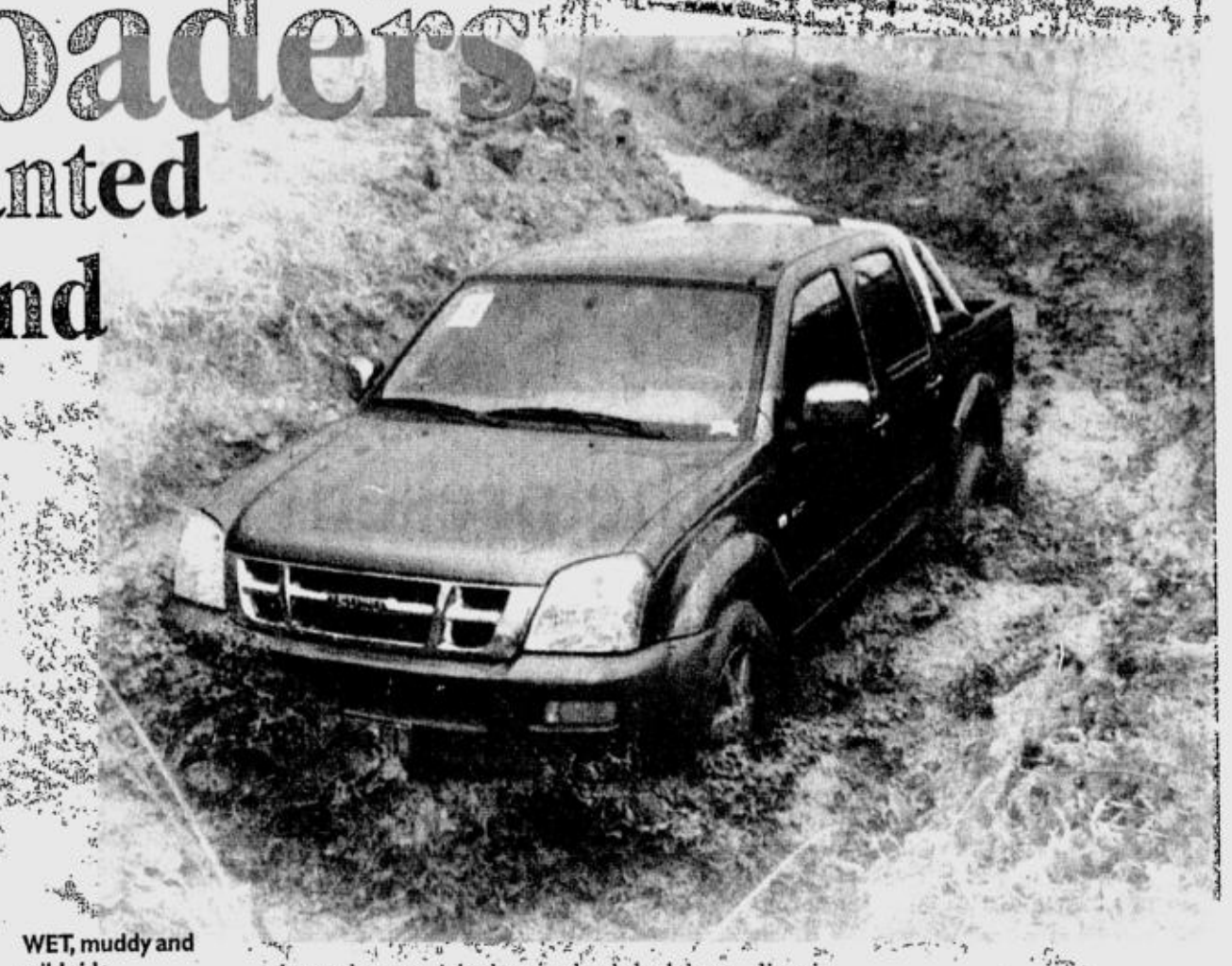
* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: You're a legend in your own mind.

High-flying off-roaders have their feet planted on rugged ground

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE APPEAL of ruggedness. There's something about off-roaders—whether they're on the two-, three- or four-wheel kind— that makes them attractive the moment you lay your eyes on them. You know right away that these fearless drivers stick to their "guns" despite a literally rough ride. That's a strong statement about commitment.



WET, muddy and wild ride

A cut above the rest

But just like any other sport, the men will stand out from the boys. And there are off-roaders that are a cut above the rest not because of the number of off-road championship trophies they take home, but the goodwill they share among fellow off-roaders and spectators alike.

GOOD-NATURED daredevil Bruce

Bruce Garland, a five-time Australian safari champion, looks and "feels" like a typical off-roader. Bruce was first a mechanic, then worked for many rally teams, then met his Japanese team partner Harry Suzuki, another good-looking chap who has won several off-roading challenges, and a veteran competitor of the Nevada Off-road challenge. The two have been together as a team for quite some time.

Recently, Bruce and Harry got to do what they did best with this writer as the appreciative spectator. But not before she herself got to work the Isuzu D-Max through its paces at the off-road driving clinic at the Fort.

Bruce later drove her over a 500-meter mud obstacle that featured 45-degree inclines and some very rough terrain, then exhibited some tight-cornering maneuvers on handbrake turns.

Bruce's handling in the mud demonstrated the D-Max's flexibility of the suspension, as it stayed consistently "flat" while we were in the car. The wheels kept in touch with the ground while the D-Max itself, and Bruce, negotiated the rough terrain.

Good-natured daredevils

And just to show how good-natured daredevils these Australians were, Bruce yelped a hearty "Heehaw!" as we climbed up the 45-degree hill. "It's like riding a kangaroo!" he cried out as soon as we went downhill.

All I saw was sky when he yelped, and then the ground by the time he said "kangaroo." I had Australian butterflies in my stomach rather than kangaroos.

"Aaaaaaah!" I screamed back at him. I imagined the butterflies fluttering out of my gaping mouth, betraying my horror at the way he approached this course gung-ho style.

"It wasn't that bad," he uttered apologetically afterward. But my mouth was still open, appearing to have lockjawed into position for the rest of the day.

Lest you think I was overacting on this one, imagine driving up the first ascent of a roller coaster at 60 kph. Then after climbing up 8 meters, go down suddenly that roller coaster at the same speed. It wasn't your walk in the park. But it was for Bruce, anyway, judging from his exuberance. And it was like a stroll in the cherry orchards for Harry, as well, as he drove another D-Max right after us.

The course, all of 500 meters, was squeezed in with a combination of off-road, ultra hard terrain, and a flat-out speed run. This obstacle course was a little bit of everything.

The course also provided an opportunity for us novice off-roaders to practice some techniques the experts did on a routine basis, such as sliding on corners to avoid going out wide on the exit of the curve. This takes a lot of practice because it involves a high rate of speed and some quick mental calculations.

Bruce reminded me that even easy tracks could "bite" anybody. When high speeds are involved, easy, safe tracks and banking maneuvers become exponentially more difficult.

Bruce then demonstrated what the D-Max was capable of doing, at the same time he remarked how this Isuzu variant had lots of torque, had a car-like drive, and overall was a package filled with good combinations.

When the three of us got together for some chitchat, Bruce took notice of the scars on Harry's arm. "Harry got that in an accident. I didn't make a corner in one of our races," he said.

He went on to narrate that they were racing in a Northern Australian competition for almost three straight days, and only had three hours of sleep during that time—when Bruce lost focus in a split second and went off the side of the road at 120 kph—more than enough speed to wrap a car around a tree. Fortunately for them, they landed on, and not around, a tree.

"We looked at the window and there was a bird's nest on the tree, and then the car rolled down and Harry's arm smashed the side window and actually hit the ground."

Amazingly, the vehicle landed right side up on the ground. Bruce started the car up and then kept on driving, with Harry's left arm bleeding profusely from a spoon-sized wound of gouged flesh.

Ten km down the course, the pair finally found a doctor to treat and dress Harry's wound.

Bruce and Harry got to finish the rally, and still ended up a respectable fourth place.

As much as the physical scar that was left on Harry, Bruce now nursed his emotional scar. "I should not have attacked (that spot) so much, what with me being so tired," Bruce said humbly.

> Just because you have an off-road vehicle doesn't mean you have a reason to damage the environment and run over animals

Respect for life

"There's a responsibility that comes with owning a four-wheel drive. You just can't do crazy things with it," Bruce mused.

"Just because you have an off-road vehicle doesn't mean you have a reason to damage the environment and run over animals.

"These vehicles give you much freedom. In doing that you have to be responsible. You just can't drive in the bush and run over everything. If everyone did that, then there'd be no bush left."

Bruce stressed that the abuse does not just constitute running over an animal, but "killing" the ecosystem where the animal lives in.

Simply put, humans don't have to wreck the environment just to enjoy their passions.

"Accidents happen, but as long as you don't deliberately damage the environment or hurt any animal life, then you're okay."

Bruce also noted that a lot of parks in Australia enforced the policy of "Whatever you take in you have to take out." He said that his children can now enjoy the same rugged environment that their father experienced.

Good combination

Back to specifics, Bruce and Harry, both used to manual transmission vehicles, were surprised that the A/T variant of the D-Max performed impressively, as well.

"It's got a lot of torque. It doesn't rev as hard as petrol (gasoline). But the torque is much flatter. You can feel the thing change gear and surge it smoothly. It's seamless," said Bruce.

Bruce, however, is not used to the antilock brake system (ABS) on rocky roads. "It doesn't work as good because that is the nature of the gravel. When you're on the dirt road, it's good to have the gravel building up in front of the tire and you can turn it."

"But it's pretty amazing what you can do with a standard vehicle with a highway tire, not an all terrain tire. D-Max exhibits good driving in city situations and in some mild off-roading."

Harry, for his part, was confident of the D-Max's handling capabilities, adding that good four-wheel driving was also about confidence.

"Some people think more horsepower is better," Harry explained. "For me, it depends on how you match your horsepower with the transmission. It depends on the tire and suspension combinations. If you miss one, you're gonna have a terrible car."

The package is the thing, indeed. Of all off-roaders, the tandem of Bruce and Harry is just one of the best examples a hunk of an off-roading team. Humble, good-natured and nature-loving. Never the brags, even if their scars betray their bragging rights.

HUNKS of an off-roading team: Bruce and Harry

ASCENT likened to that of a mini roller coaster

'Take it into context,' urges LTO chief

From page C1

posed to the streets selling sampaguita or wiping windshields on traffic stops in our country than in any other countries."

Poverty

Jacobo added that it is poverty that has pushed children to the streets and made them prone to accidents.

"Do we blame (this situation) on the highway engineers alone? Should we blame it on traffic enforcers alone? Laxity of laws involves not only traffic but also on child labor, in this instance," she stressed.

The Safe Kids Worldwide report revealed that one in seven road traffic fatalities is a child pedestrian. One in three road traffic injuries involves a child pedestrian.

The study was based on collated government statistics on traffic accidents over the last 12 years.

In the Philippines, 11 kids aged 14 and under are killed in road accidents every hour, with four out of these 11 victims killed as pedestrians.

The report revealed that in the Philippines alone, some 2,250 children aged 14 and below were killed and 93,854 in the same age group were injured in traffic related accidents.

The Safe Kids Worldwide report was based on data gathered from various government institutions such as the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Philippine National Police, the Land Transportation Office, the Department of Health, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the National Center for Transport Studies and the Asian Development Bank in a span of 12 years.

Accurate figures?

Jacobo, however, cast doubt on the accuracy of the figures. "What would be the basis of the report when there's underreporting?"

She pointed out that there could also be "double reports" of accidents. She said records in hospitals and at the DOH sometimes do not correspond with those of the Philippine National Police.

Jacobo observed that there had never been any centralized and organized data base system to keep track of traffic accidents in the country.

She said the Safe Kids Worldwide report, for it to reflect accuracy, should not only have gathered statistics but also analyzed contrasting data.

Meanwhile, it had been only recently that the Philippines has started with a centralized recording system via the newly placed Traffic Accident Recording and Analysis System (Taras). Taras is a foreign-funded project of the DPWH. The DPWH officials involved in Taras, however, could not be reached for comment as of press time.

Jacobo is a member of the working group of the national road safety committee.

Neglected laws

The motorists, and even the public, might not be aware that laws governing sidewalks even exist. Did you know that Republic Act 4136 outlaws driving or parking any motor vehicle upon or along any sidewalk, path or alley not intended for vehicle traffic or parking?

And did you know that Batas Pambansa 344, the Accessibility Law, also prohibits the obstruction of sidewalks for use of disabled and able-bodied persons?

These were just two of many other "neglected" laws that Alex P. Loinaz, road safety advocate and automotive technologist, said were generally ignored and not enforced by the public and traffic officers.

"These are simple laws not implemented by the local mayors and the government. These are the reasons people and kids walk on the streets (where vehicles run).

"There's also the need to educate people to walk facing traffic," Loinaz added.

Advocating road safety

In an INQUIRER report last week, the MMDA said the worsening problem of traffic accidents had been addressed for the past few years. MMDA has been constructing additional footbridges and fences on busy sidewalks.

Jacobo herself has been actively conducting safety clinics in areas under her group's surveillance. Her target areas are those that pose a high risk for pedestrians, particularly children. Road signs, however, are still needed in these areas.

Jacobo urged the public to be more active in advocating road safety, especially for children. "We have the Philippine road safety action plan crafted under the auspices of the Asian Development Bank and other partners in the private sector. There were 15 sectors addressed, one of them was the youth sector," she said.

Based on traffic accident data Jacobo collected from hospitals in 2001, young people below 15 years of age were identified as the most vulnerable to road accidents.

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ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Highway eyesores; Arnel's 'little things'

THE BAN on billboards that are being indiscriminately erected, not only in Metro Manila but also along the highways of the archipelago, must be pursued to the ends of the earth.

They are now almost all over the stretch of the MacArthur Highway going up North. Already, they have invaded the pristine scenery of the Romulo Highway, that major artery connecting Tarlac and Pangasinan via Camiling, the birthplace of the legendary Carlos P. Romulo.

Not only have they destroyed our landscape, the billboard-erectors also have bastardized the trees lining up the highways. Billboards of almost all shapes and sizes have been nailed to tree trunks like acacias, eucalyptus and narra. If trees could talk, they'd be cursing humans to high heavens by now.

* * *

Now if there are billboard builders, where are the billboard bashers?

There's one in Pangasinan. His name is Rob Dix.

"I just destroyed a billboard they've put in the highway not far from my place," he said, smiling triumphantly as he narrated his story. "There ought to be a law against putting up signboards on the highway as they obstruct traffic view, especially if the signboard is placed on curves."

I believe him. Let's all rally behind Rob Dix. Let's tear down not only those erected on the shoulders of highways but also all those signboards nailed to the trees.

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

For one, they are encroaching on public property. For another, they are destroying our esthetics while at the same time hurting our trees and environment.

Unite, environmentalists and nature lovers! Remove those illegally constructed signboards/billboards that have become not only eyesores but also traffic obstructions.

* * *

If plans didn't go awry, I should be feeling extra happy today. That is, if I made it to yesterday's golf tournament at Riviera for the annual event of the motoring journalists headed by Elvis "Butch" Gamboa.

Well, just like Toyota's Danny "Sir John" Isla, there was no reason for me to skip yesterday's event. I am in town, unlike the previous year when I wasn't around when it was staged.

I have to doff my hat off to Elvis and my fellow motoring writers for staging the tournament as it is for the benefit of meritorious plans designed specifically to educate our motorists the proper and politically correct way of driving a vehicle.

Always count me in, fellas, whenever there's a project to be launched toward this end.

* * *

Now for once, let's digress a bit and go on to something that should be food for the soul. Honda's Arnel Doria never runs out of surprises and the following is his latest. Read on about his "The Little Things," which, I am told, Tin Tin Reyes absolutely adores:

"As you might know, the head of a company in the World Trade Towers survived 9/11 because his son started kindergarten.

"Another fellow was alive because it was his turn to bring donuts.

"One woman was late because her alarm clock didn't go off on time.

"One was late because of being stuck on the NJ Turnpike because of an auto accident.

"One of them missed his bus!

"One spilled food on her clothes and had to take time to change.

"One's car wouldn't start.

"One went back to answer the telephone.

"One had a child that dawdled and didn't get ready as soon 'as he should have.'

"One couldn't get a taxi.

"The one that struck me was the man who put on a new pair of shoes that morning, took the various means to get to work but before he got there, he developed a blister on his foot.

"He stopped at a drugstore to buy a Band-Aid. That is why 'he is alive today.'

"Now when I am stuck in traffic, miss an elevator, turn back to answer a ringing telephone... all the little things that annoy me. I think to myself, this is exactly where God wants me to be at this very moment.

"Next time your morning seems to be going wrong, the children are slow getting dressed, you can't seem to find the car keys, you hit every traffic light, don't get mad or frustrated.

"God is at work watching over you. May God continue to bless you with all those annoying little things and may you remember their possible purpose."

Thanks a lot, Kabaleyan Arnel.

* * *

My felicitations go to CATS and DaimlerChrysler, whose partnership will be formally forged tomorrow, April 28, at 6:30 p.m. at the Rizal Ballroom, Shangri-La Makati. It's a strictly-by-invitation affair and that's fine. When corporate giants are at play, they do it by the rules. Attire: Business. Necktie, no problem; I have lots of it. It's the coat. I'll try to rush one for the occasion. I'll needle, if possible, my tailor to have the coat ready by tomorrow morning, Thursday.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Why do we constantly see overloaded trucks and slow trucks using the lane supposedly for fast-vehicles-only at the Northern Luzon Expressway? Because they are allowed to enter the expressway and then habitually tolerated by patrol cars to inflict their thing on law-abiding motorists.

Yokohamas compensate for engine performance drop

IN SPITE of steering problems, super-quick Ananda Mikola of Indonesia still managed to top the opening leg of the 2005 Addict Mobile Asian Formula 3 Super Prix series at the Batangas Racing Circuit and create an all-foreign podium finish. And in spite of the high ambient temperatures that caused engines to drop in performance levels, F3 racers managed to put in fast times at the Batangas Racing Circuit because of the "grippy" Yokohamas.

Driving for Fastron Racing with Three Bond on a Dallara F304 chassis with a Toyota Tom's engine, the 26-year-old Mikola accumulated a total time of 31 minutes and 4.55 seconds over two races at the BRC. Australian Christian Jones, the 2004 overall AF3 series champion, was second on the podium at 31 minutes and 7.712 seconds, while Irishman John O'Hara finished third with a cumulative clocking of 31 minutes and 34.846 seconds.

Good start

With over 100 supporters of mostly Philippine-based Indonesian students cheering him on, Mikola expertly fought off the challenge of Jones. Said the Indonesian: "I had a good start and just held on (to the finish). After six laps, I had problems steering the car. I had to keep an eye on Christian, maintain the gap, and finish the race."

"The tires were good. But I can't give a comment with certainty about (the Yokohamas) because the asphalt in the Batangas Circuit is not good. I'll be able to make a better evaluation on the tires in China," he added

Jones, of Christian Jones Motorsport, had an excellent start but admitted the gap with Mikola was just too big toward the race's end. The Australian drove with a relatively older Dallara F301 chassis powered by a Neil Brown Engineering Honda Mugen engine, but these simply weren't enough to beat Mikola on race weekend. Jones's team had the new F304 chassis, but no matching engine on hand.

Summer heat

The Australian noted the summer heat was a factor—not for him, but for the cars—saying the high track-surface temperature increased the tires' grip. "(The weather) was very hot but I'm used to it," he said.

"The tires were working very well, particularly when braking. But the heat dropped the performance of the engine." Jones is contemplating on installing a new engine for the next AF3 stage in Zhuhai City, China in May.

O'Hara of the Fujitsu-Ten Toyota Team had an essentially problem-free race weekend. "The tires seemed to have a higher grip this year. I don't think it was because of the higher track temperatures," he commented.

After the first two stages, Mikola has 40 points; Jones, 30; and O'Hara, 22. Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO's James Winslow of Great Britain stands at fourth with 20 points.

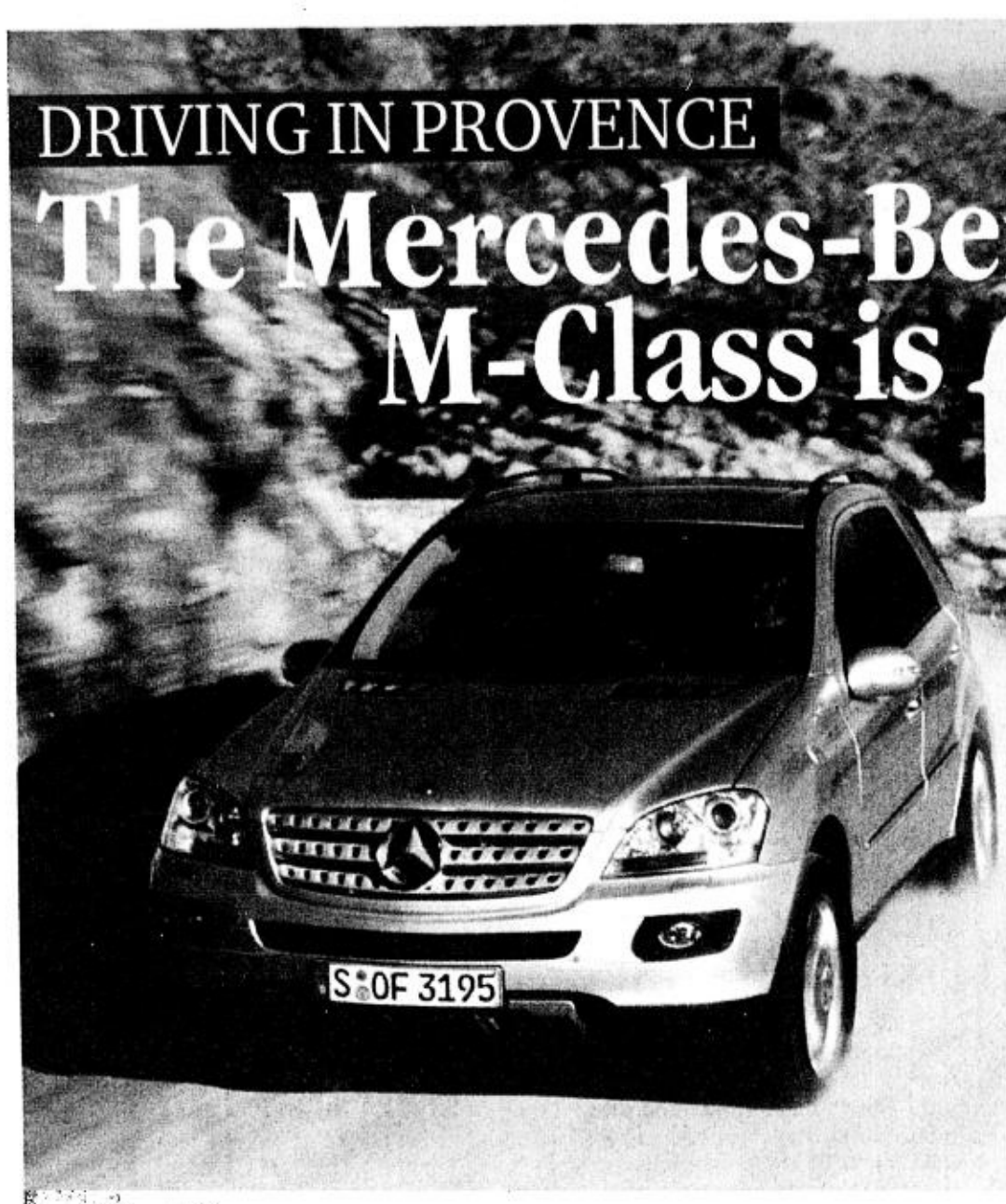
Exclusive tire supplier

Yokohama has been the exclusive tire supplier for AF3 races since 2002. For the AF3 races, Advan A005 180/50VR13 tires are used for the front, while 240/45VR13 tires are mounted in the rear axle position. Much of the technical feedback from racing Advan tires have been utilized in the design and production of Yokohama's Advan Neova high-performance street tires.

A newly developed "fine-particle" micro silica tread compounding process was used in the Neova. The fine particle process provides increased presence of silica in the tread compound, in turn providing greater road surface adhesion.

DRIVING IN PROVENCE

The Mercedes-Benz M-Class is first class



CHATEAU de Berne

By Jun Engracia

SPRING in Provence is a sight for tired and jetlagged eyes. Fresh out of a cold winter—with the French and Italian Alps still blanketed in snow in the horizon—but already thawing to a pleasant spring weather, it seemed like a perfect time and place to test-drive the new Mercedes–Benz M-Class.

M-Class is a premium off-roader. For most, it's a luxury sport utility vehicle. But those words don't even begin to describe the luxurious and exhilarating experience of driving the mid-sized M-Class. For lucky few who have driven it, M-Class is, simply, first class.

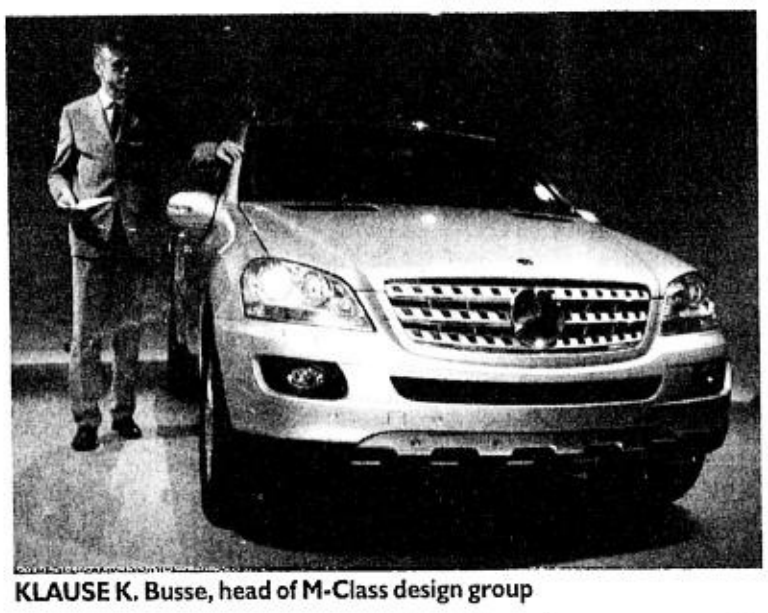
Living for two weeks off a suitcase, hopping from one time zone to another and not knowing what day of the week it was, jet-setting was the last thing on this driver's mind when he crawled back to Manila one day last March.

But the prospect of test driving a new Mercedes-Benz in the South of France—something he would not swap for a ringside seat in Manny Pacquiao's fight in garish Las Vegas—put him on the next plane out and off to another continent, with barely enough time to unpack and pack a new set of warm clothes.

Spring was warmer than expected in the South of France but not yet warm enough to draw the usual jet-set types and other vacationers who go south for the summer to crowd the streets, highways and beaches of the French Riviera. The scenic charm of the region put this writer in a dilemma on what to write—a motoring piece or a travel article. Both is what this is all about.

Full might and glory

The off-season gave the M-Class enough elbow room to display, on and off the road, its full might and glory to a group of international motoring journalists who came over, on the invitation of DaimlerChrysler of course, to test drive Mercedes-Benz's second-generation SUV.



KLAUSE K. Busse, head of M-Class design group

The off-road capability of the M-Class is even more impressive

Picking out the middle-of-the-range ML 350 model at the car park in front of the Nice International Airport, the driver quickly started to make sense of the technical gibberish provided in the press information kits:

A 3.5-liter V6 gasoline engine with an output of 200kW/272 horsepower and a torque of 350 Newton meters matched with a standard seven-speed automatic transmission. An all-new chassis designed to make the M-Class a standard by which all other vehicles in its class will be measured in driving dynamics and riding comfort. A double-wishbone front axle suspension and four-link design in the rear axle. Active safety features that include antilock braking system (ABS), brake assist, the electronic stability program (ESP). Permanent all-wheel drive and an electronic traction system which brakes the wheels with poor grip and sends more power to the wheels with more grip. And a state-of-the-art restraint system that includes two-stage front airbags, front side bags, window bags, belt tensioners and belt force limiters for all seats.

Sounds German to you? Read on.

The off-road capability of the M-Class is even more impressive. Its Downhill Speed Regulation keeps the speed constant on steep downhill gradients. The Start-off Assist keeps the vehicle from rolling backward during steep uphill starts and its off-road ABS shortens the downhill braking distance. The M-Class also offers other options, like the extended off-road package that includes a two-speed transfer case with low-range gearing; engageable differential locks between front and rear axles; and for the rear axle, modified AirMatic air suspension which raises the ground clearance to 291 mm and fording depth to 600 mm when negotiating rivers and floods.

Okay, okay. That still doesn't sound English at all. But wait till you get inside the car and behind the wheels of the M-Class. (Two other variants used in the test drive were the ML 320 CDI with its newly developed 224-hpV6 diesel engine and the top of the range eight-cylinder ML 500 with 306 hp.)

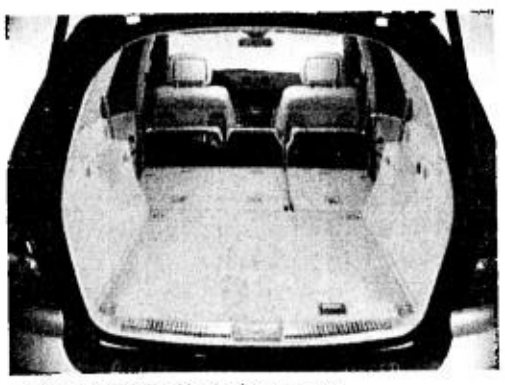
Exterior design

With class and luxury written all over it, the M-Class simply stood out at the car park with its sporty but elegant good looks (the brawn is hidden under the hood and under the vehicle). Mercedes-Benz describes the new M-Class exterior design as an interplay between strong contoured lines surfaces and taut lines. It is undoubtedly sporty, but neither does it look muscle-bound. It is longer and has a wider wheel base than its predecessor, the original award-winning M-Class which premiered in 1997 and had since blazed new trails in off-roading.

All variants have the nano-particle paintwork, which means the body is almost scratch resistant and has a longer shine.

Inside, the M-Class is definitely roomy and luxurious with its maximum load capacity of 2,050 liters. Pushing a button starts the ignition and a flick of a finger (much like activating a windshield wiper or a signal light) puts the car on drive, neutral or reverse. Flick a finger here, push a button there and you feel like Michael Schumacher trying to screech off the pit lane with a Formula 1 car stolen from Kimi Raikkonen's garage (whatever it takes to finally win a next grand prix this season).

Keyless entry is ho-hum, but a keyless start can impress the impressionable. And that's just the first of the many surprises that the M-Class had in store for this over-the-hill motoring writer whose last memorable test drives netted him the Asyong Aksaya Award as the top gas guzzler in an economy run and the Fastest Illegal Time in an old-fashioned treasure hunt in tandem with the late dean of motoring writers, Tony Siddayao. (One otherwise forgettable mini-rally had this driver's navigator barf all over the carpet and upholstery from motion sickness; this one did not merit any dubious award).



2,050 LITERS of interior space

Cruising along the A8 (La Provencale) Motorway for the 58-kilometer first stage of the test drive from the Nice Airport to the Four Seasons Resort Terre Blanche near Tourettes, the outstanding qualities of the M-Class in on-road handling became evident. The Mercedes-Benz M-Class breezed through the speed limits with relative ease.

A word of caution: The humming you hear at 160 kph can lull one to slumber, and it doesn't mean you're within the speed limits either. When driving with an international driver's license anywhere, it's always prudent to stay within the legal limits, both in speed and inebriation levels (for Provence, 130 kph in the highway and 50 milliliters of alcohol in the bloodstream). And, you don't test and challenge manufacturer's claims of, say zero to 100 kph in 8.4 seconds. If that's what it says in the ML 350 brochure, you'll just have to take their word. The top-of-the-range ML 500 has an even more impressive 6.9 seconds, but of course, no M-Class owner would want to try that with his own car.

First class, all the way

The drive from Nice to the Four Seasons Resort Terre Blanche, one of the most exclusive hotels in the Mediterranean coast (yes, Mercedes-Benz goes first class all the way), was without any hitches. On this drive, the M-Class proved its worth as a touring vehicle.

After lunch, the test drivers were off on a 61-km route to Chateau de Berne, a small luxury hotel in the middle of an ancient vineyard near the small town called Lorgues. It was a pleasant one-hour drive through a historic route that included Via Aurelia, an old Roman highway that linked Provence with Italy in ancient times. The M-Class handled superbly on the twisting and narrow country roads in the hilly hinterlands, through the medieval town of Draguignan and the ancient Roman settlement of Flayosc.

From this secluded luxury getaway, the M-Class went off the beaten track and into the wild side. The off-road track was still inside vineyard but away from the vines—in the hilly and rocky terrain making up most of the 550-hectare area of woods and olive groves. It was on this unforgiving dirt track, uncharted by the road book provided the test drivers and by the built-in global positioning navigation system, that the Mercedes-Benz M-Class as a sport utility vehicle was at its best.

Nimble as a mountain goat

As nimble as the mountain goats on the islands off France's Mediterranean coast, the M-Class passed every test and every trick

THE MERCEDES/ C7

ROCKY off-road terrain

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Lament and longing

ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

THERE are many downsides to being a third world automotive market. There are aspects to complain about—most serious and some trivial—but wearing the hat of a "consumer" seems to give the bleakest outlook on motoring.

This is strange as it is consumer spending that allows the industry to survive. Vehicle manufacturers, their industry associations, the Philippine government and some of the media would vehemently say otherwise regarding the less than happy state of our automotive affairs. Their protests would be but logical, as these sectors are some of the biggest benefactors of the automotive industry equation.

CATCH MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

Before this weekly installment degenerates into a never-ending litany of "how bad we have it over here in the Philippines," let's focus on a single factor in the auto industry for this week, okay? We must pose questions about the availability of more cars that are relevant to the current Philippine market situation.

Market not large enough

Fine, let us accede to the fact that our market is not large enough for the likes of boutique car marquees like Volkswagen Automobile Group's Buggati or the lusty top-down, British bombshells of Caterham. Truly galactic pricing and market acceptance would definitely end the possibility of seeing the 1 million Euro, 1,000 horsepower Bugatti Veyron and the track day Spartan warrior that is the Caterham 7. Brands like these must unhappily remain the object of our vivid daydreams and nocturnal imaginings.

Even introducing a new mainstream brand into the market, under the current economic situations, would be a scary task to say the least. As much as we would like to see Philippine relevant models of the SEAT and Daihatsu brands plying our nation's byways, we all know it would take a significant financial and human effort to bring this about.

By contrasting a comparable locally available car, the spot-on appropriate, bang for peso Honda Jazz (1.3 liter, 82 bhp, 88 ft/lbs of torque, claimed 20.7 km/l highway use), to an example each from SEAT and Daihatsu, we have a clear picture of what we as consumers are missing out on.

The 1.9-liter diesel SEAT Ibiza gives out 128 bhp and 229 ft/lb of torque plus a factory quoted 23.5 km/l and all this for a little more (approximately 10 percent, in European markets) than the price of a Honda Jazz. The new Daihatsu Charade 1.0 liter is claimed to accelerate to a 62 mph (100 kph) velocity faster than the Jazz by a whole second, uses less fuel (claimed 25.1 km/l) and should cost half as much. Fuel-efficient cars that are pleasant to drive and own are not just pipe dreams for the delirious, but are commonplace in more developed markets.

What about locally established vehicle brands introducing more relevant models? Isn't it but logical that introduction of more models would be financially and logistically easier for these household name trademarks? The answer is an unsatisfying "yes and no" response. With their physical plant already built, corporate organizations in place and overheads already being serviced by ongoing sales, locally present manufacturers could easily gift the Philippine market with cars more apt for our times.

Skeptical market

Sadly it is skeptical market acceptance of new and unfamiliar automobile design that keeps the vehicle manufacturers from addressing this issue at full clip. Toyota tried to address the issue of a market relevant vehicle with the introduction of the Echo model in the late Nineties. The Echo, known as the Vitz and Yaris in other markets, did not have the impact that many a pundit (myself included) predicted.

I still believe to this day that the Echo was the solution to the transportation needs of many urbane Filipinos and they did not know it. Unbeknown to quite a few Filipino vehicle owners, they owe the performance and efficiency of their Vios sedans to the little round Echo.

Small, affordable and well-engineered performers can be had from most of the manufacturers already in the country. Mitsubishi has in its developed market lineup, the surprising Colt super mini. Powered by engines ranging from a 1.1-liter, 74 bhp gasoline 3 cylinder to a completely mad 1.5-liter, 150 bhp, turbocharged and intercooled inline four, it has been deemed a late entry into the modern hatchback arena; albeit a very good one.

Ford has the all-around new Fiesta mini and customers can have it with anything from a 1.25-liter, 74 bhp lump to a massive 2.0 inline four with an ample 148 bhp. Nissan takes its stylish Micra hatch to market with a 1.0-liter, 64 bhp entry-level version and keeps the model line from escalating further beyond a 120 bhp version tuned by their motor sport arm, Nismo.

Need for educated market

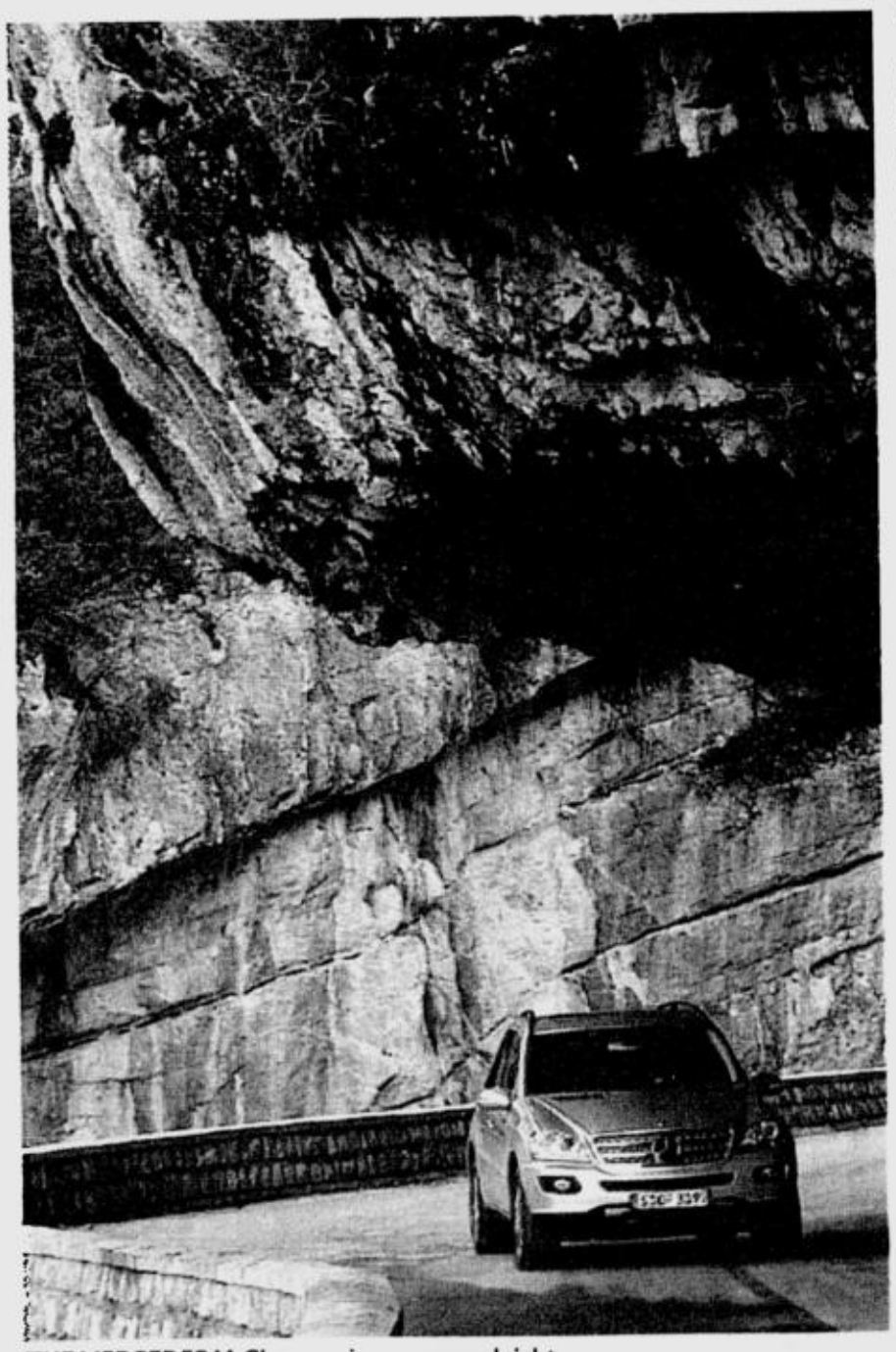
The leading manufacturers' current small car lineups clearly address the needs of hard-core commuters and drivers alike. This is what we need in the Philippines.

It is incidents, like the aforementioned "Echo Episode," that keep affordable and effective cars from our roads. An educated consumer market would have chosen wisely. Lack of product education and foresight into the developing economic malaise keeps us from progressing as discerning customers.

This is why the sale of gas-guzzling and technologically-obsolete designs is still permissible and acceptable in local showroom floors. More than ever, the way we Filipinos motor is inescapably tied to the times. As consumers, we must do our homework and see what is available in other markets, choosing carefully what is relevant to our country today.

The Mercedes-Benz M-Class is first class

From page C6


THE MERCEDES M-Class passing an unusual sight

posed by the rugged course. The first obstacle was a series of deep ruts that were more like booby traps set to the exact depth and width of the M-Class tires. The left front wheel dropped into one and the right rear wheel lifted off the surface. With a slight grunt the car climbed out easily. Down the next pothole, the driver pressed level 1 of the differential locks and the car moved out of it even more easily, and this time with neither grunt nor strain. And so it went with the differential locks; the harder maneuver, the higher the level.

Through rocks and dirt and rivers, steep uphill and downhill stretches, the M-Class romped and stamped its class. Particularly impressive was the steep downhill speed control, which kept the speed constant at a precarious 6 kph (it can go as fast as 18 kph) over loose dirt and gravel; and the drive up the steepest of the uphills—with differential locks set at level 3—which felt like driving a roller coaster up to its highest point with the ground out of sight and nothing but a streak of clouds in the blue sky as a reference point and an olive tree as a turning point. All of these minus the hard and rugged ride one would expect under these road conditions.

The M-Class would impress the journalist some more with its cruising and handling qualities on the drive back to Four Seasons Resort and the next day's final leg of the test drive—a scenic 76-km ride to Cannes via the Corniche d'Or, described as one of the most beautiful stretches of road on the Mediterranean. The narrow and winding route, highlighted by the red cliffs of the Esterel Massif, was a relaxed ride.

The drive was climaxed by a final two-kilometer stretch of the world-famous Croisette promenade, past the palace of the Cannes film festival—an appropriate catwalk for the elegant star of stars, toward the L'Ecrin Plage Restaurant by the beach and marina. Even in the star-studded jet-set community of Cannes, the M-Class was turning heads.

Simplicity and timelessness

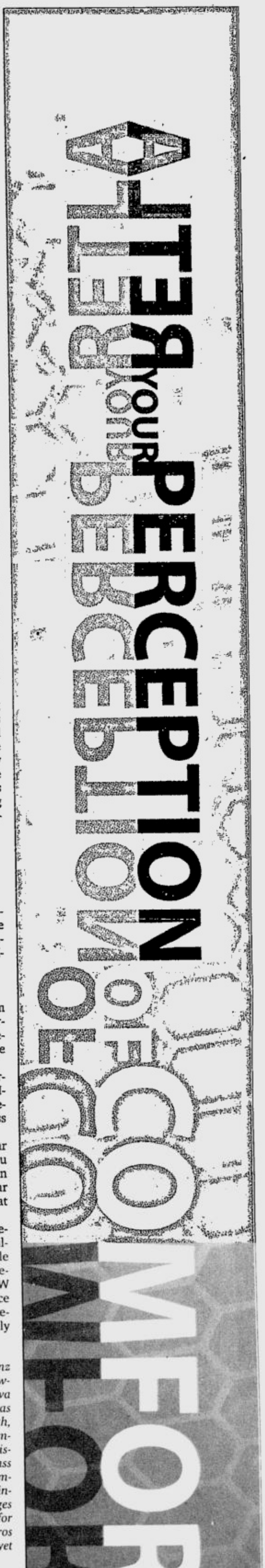
Klause K. Busse, head of the team that designed the new M-Class in Germany, was profuse with pride as he described the design of the M-Class at the end station.

The new M-Class, Busse said, "carries the genes of the first generation M-Class. It has added character while retaining the simplicity and timelessness of the first generation.

"If you're a pop star and you hear your song on the radio, it makes you feel good," Busse said. "Similarly, when designers like us see on the road the car we designed, we can say with great pride: That's my car."

Majestic. Champion in its class. Refined power. Elegant automotive. Multitalented. Simple yet timeless. Role model. These have been used to describe the new M-Class. But for a BMW X5 owner who watched the M-Class ace the off-road tests in his father's vineyards at Chateau de Berne, there's only one word to describe it: WOW!

(Editors note: The new Mercedes-Benz M-Class is now in full production following its premier in the Detroit and Geneva auto shows earlier this year. It was launched in the United States this month, and will be on sale in Europe this summer. According to CATS Motors, local distributor of Daimler Benz, the M-Class will arrive in the Philippines in September. The price in Germany ex-factory (including German value-added tax) ranges from 46,342 euros (about $60,000) for the ML280 CDI model to 63,220 euros (about $82,000). Local pricing is not yet available.)



Audi A6 named 'World Car of the Year'

A PANEL of judges made up of 48 renowned motoring journalists has reached its verdict: the inaugural title of "World Car of the Year" has been awarded to the Audi A6.

In taking this honor, the sporty business saloon left its 35 rivals from all categories trailing in its dust. The award ceremony was held on Feb. 16 as part of the Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto.

Criteria

The panel members represented all of the major car markets and many of the leading motoring publications from around the world.

They rated the 36 candidates based both on objective criteria, such as product characteristics, and on their emotional charisma: the "wow" factor is clearly just as important an evaluation criteria as safety and environment or value for money.

Accolades

The "World Car of the Year" award is just the latest in a whole string of accolades which the latest Audi A6 has already captured in its debut year in the motoring arena. Other titles include the "Auto Trophy" from Auto Zeitung, "Auto1" from Auto Bild, the "Golden Steering Wheel" presented by the German newspaper Bild am Sonntag, "The Best Cars/Luxury Category" as voted by auto motor and sport readers as well as the "Yellow Angel" presented by the German motoring association Adac.

Such credits have justifiably earned the Audi A6 its mantle as one of the most successful instant hits of all time, with both the press and public alike.

M Sports package available

THE TRENDSETTING design and engineering of the BMW 5 Series offers a combination of business-class luxury and elegance with responsive driving dynamics.

Now, sports-oriented BMW 5 Series owners can enhance the athletic appearance of their vehicles with the new M aerodynamic package.

Style, function

Specifically developed for the 5 Series, the new M Sports package is tailored to the car both in style and function.

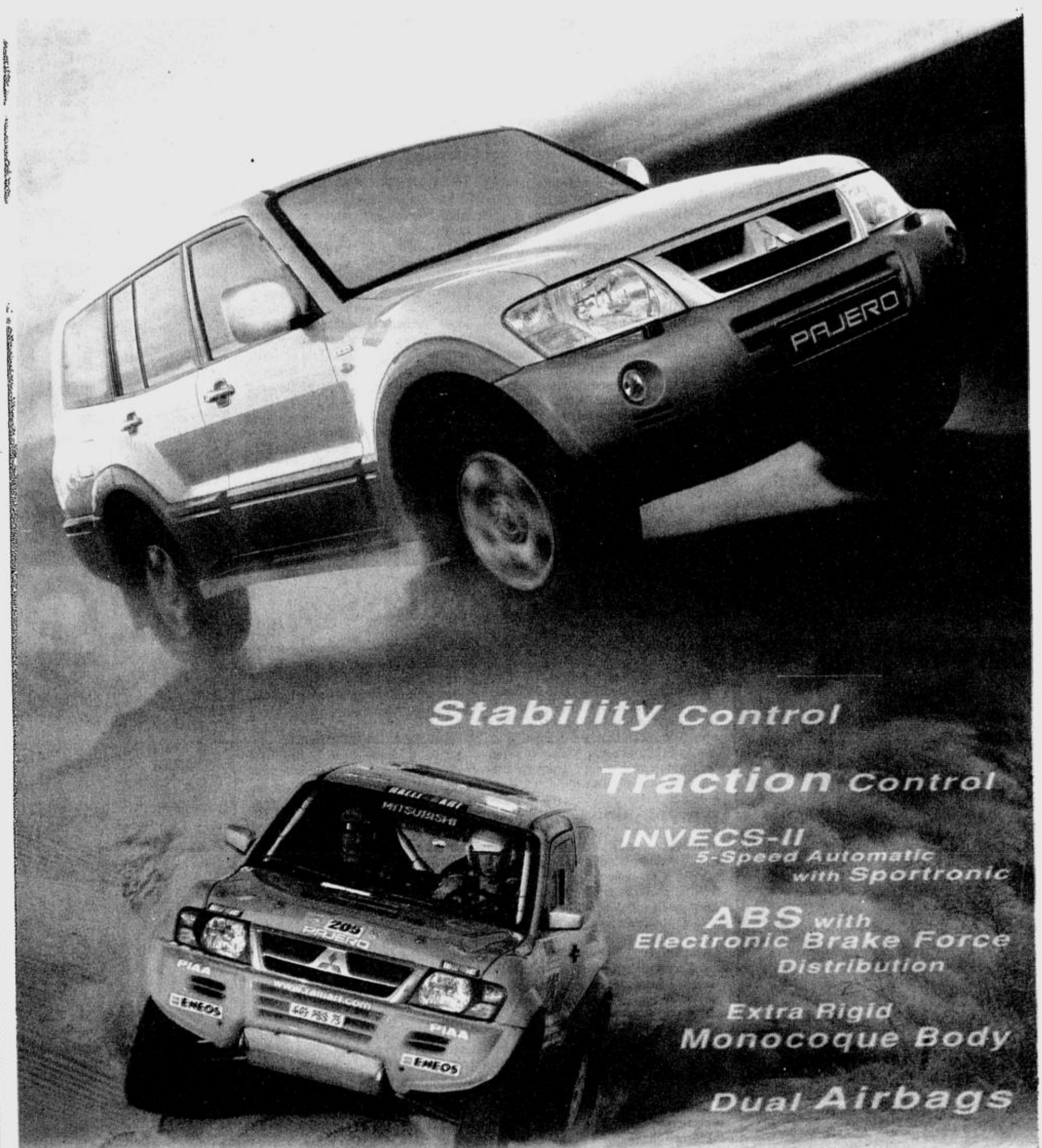
The front apron projects an undeniably muscular statement with its integrated sports large air intakes while supplying more air to the engine. The sleek front spoiler lips, on the other hand, reduce lift coefficients resulting in driving stability even at high speeds.

Appearance

The low, wide side sills emphasize the length and width of the car for a more dynamic appearance while optimizing air routing in the underbody, thereby adding to the superb driving qualities of the vehicle.

The rear diffuser and flaps complete the vehicle's sporty stance from every angle, and at the same time, improves the airflow across the underbody for an excellent drag coefficient leading to added driving stability.

Mitsubishi PAJERO
Excellence driven.



Our insatiable drive to improvement has led us to countless victories. Victories almost impossible to achieve. Like winning for the 5th consecutive time in the most intense race in the world—the Dakar Rally. And these triumphs are not only experienced by our Dakar participants but also those who drive the Pajero. Because what we learned in Dakar, we apply in the Pajero. Improving its power, suspension, torque and handling.

That's why when you drive a Pajero, you are a winner.

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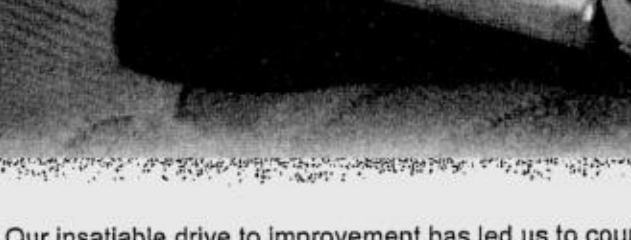

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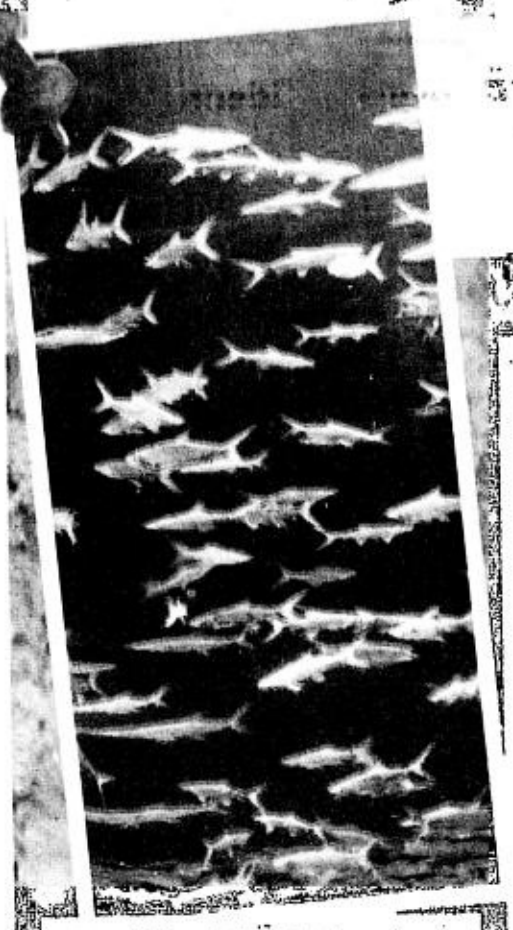
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Chief of Correspondents **Pam Pastor**

World, here I come!

Last week, we gave you a dose of our favorite local spots. This week, 2bU! encourages you to leave your comfort zone and explore the rest of the planet. Here are places to visit, sights to see, things to do in the playground that we call earth. Bon voyage!

Text and photos by Pam Pastor



Sea World in Jakarta

Why go: Make friends with more than 4,000 fish and sharks. Check out the deep-sea panorama that you can enjoy while standing on a mechanical walkway, which takes you through the 8-meter tunnel.

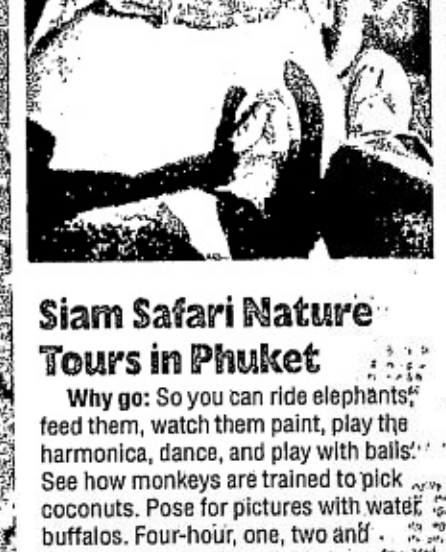
What to bring: A camera

Siam Safari Nature Tours in Phuket

Why go: So you can ride elephants, feed them, watch them paint, play the harmonica, dance, and play with balls. See how monkeys are trained to pick coconuts. Pose for pictures with water buffalos. Four-hour, one, two and three-day tours are available from this award-winning nature tour operator.

What to bring: Your camera

The office of Siam Safari Nature tours is located at 45 Chao Far Road Chalong Phuket 83130. Call 66-76280116. Visit www.siamsafari.com or e-mail info@siamsafari.com.



Sarinah in Jakarta

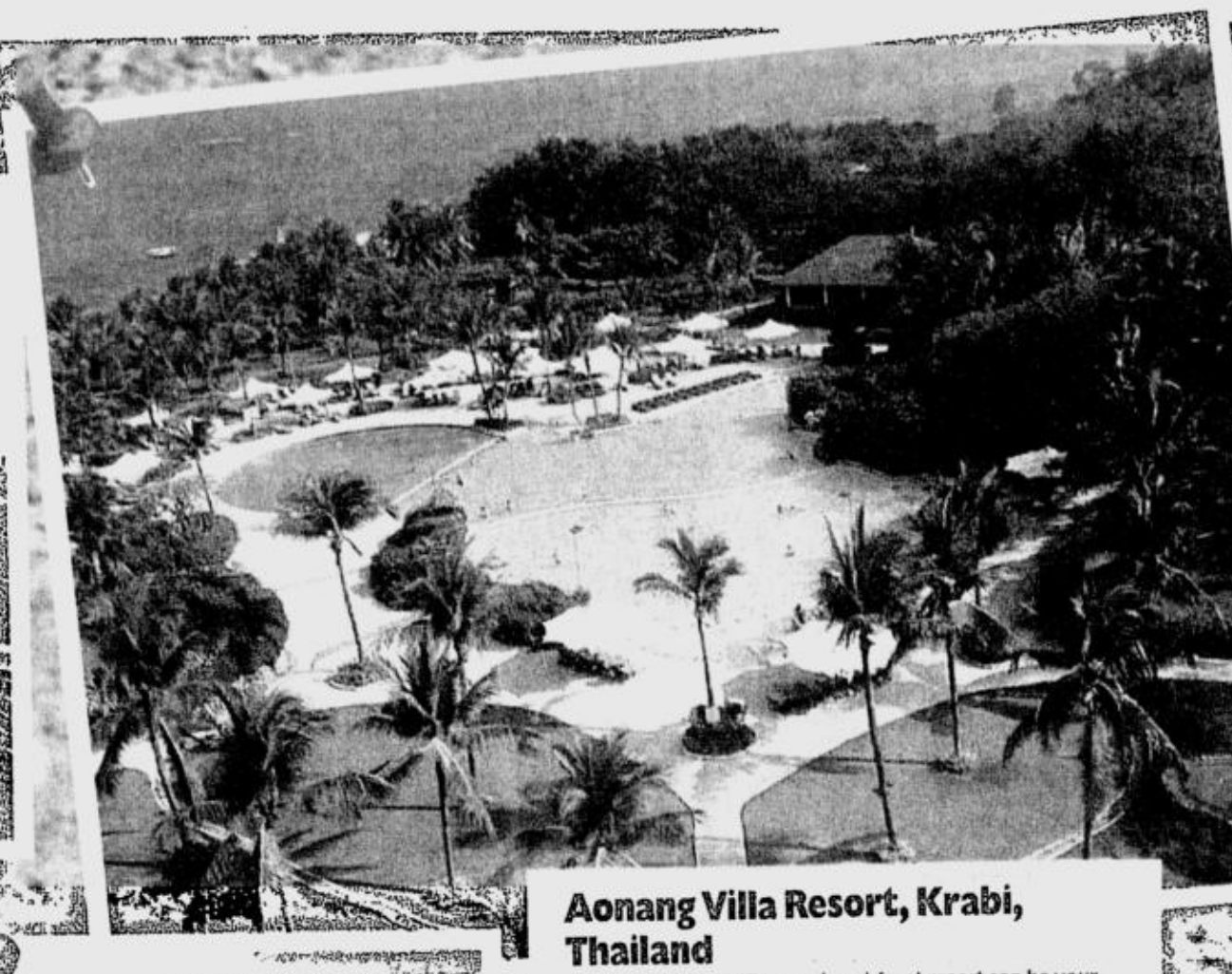
Why go: Sarinah is a seven-story shopping paradise selling all kinds of local handicrafts. The salespeople are so friendly and the atmosphere is so serene. Watch out for a group of young salesclerks who would start playing different traditional instruments.

What to bring: A lot of cash and a lot of time

The Great Wall of China

Why go: There are two ways to go—the steeper but shorter path, or the easier but longer route. If you reach the top, you get a certificate. If you don't reach the top, you can buy fake certificates. Kidding. The Great Wall of China will take your breath away in two ways.

What to bring: Your strength, a camera and your cellphone so you can call your friends from the Great Wall



Aonang Villa Resort, Krabi, Thailand

Why go: This 157-room beachfront resort can be your paradise. Set against the glorious background of limestone cliffs, the expansive beach can please your inner beach bum while the pools offer fun without stinging your eyes. The Villa Spa also offers an extra dose of relaxation. Choose between the large open-air treatment area or a private suite with a private Jacuzzi and steam room.

What to bring: Your camera, beach gear and your family.

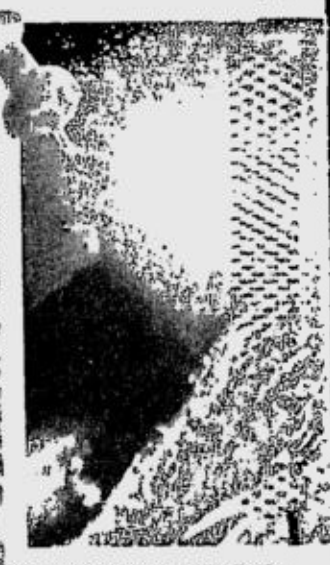
Aonang Villa Resort is at 113 Moo 2, Ao Nang Beach, Muang, Krabi 81000, Thailand. Call 66-75637270 to 4. Visit www.aonangvilla.com or e-mail info@aonangvilla.com.

Trapeze lessons in Sentosa, Singapore

Why go: Make your childhood dreams of joining the circus come true by getting a crash course on the trapeze. If stunts aren't your thing, Sentosa has a lot of other things to offer.

What to bring: Your guts and someone to take your photos

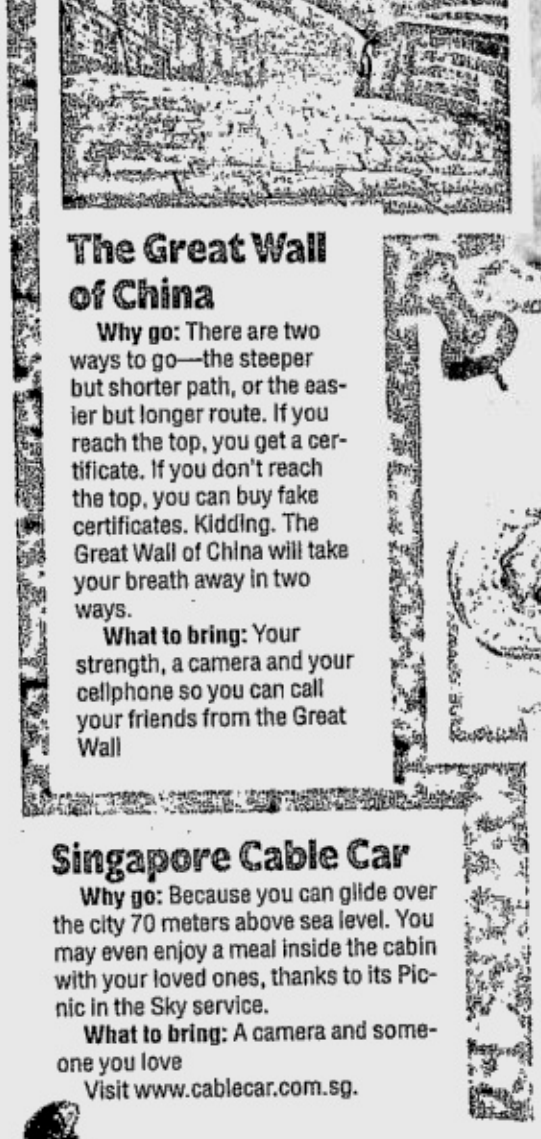
Visit www.sentosa.com.sg.



Underwater World, Sentosa, Singapore

Why go: Be enchanted by underwater life without getting wet.

What to bring: A camera



Singapore Cable Car

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What to bring: A camera and someone you love

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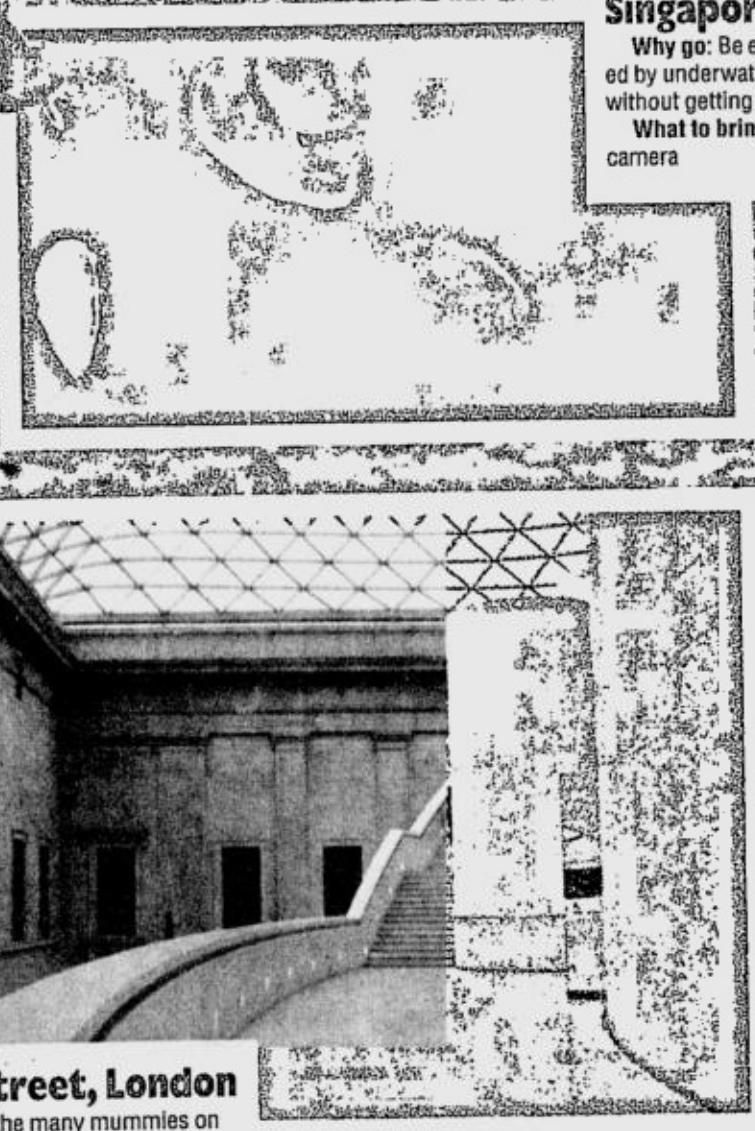
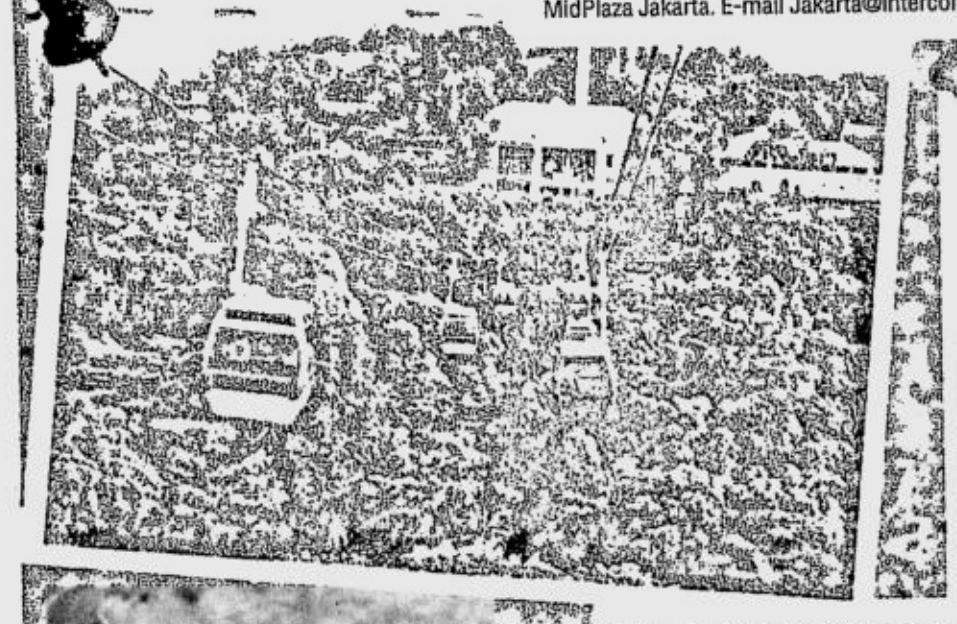
Scusa in InterContinental MidPlaza, Jakarta, Indonesia

Why go: For an unforgettable Italian meal. Chef Luca Pezzera works wonders in the kitchen. Oven-baked Australian scallops served with sauteed spinach, olive oil and hollandaise sauce. Scusa Antipasti. Asparagus and Garlic Shiitake Salad with Crispy Pancetta. Foie Gras Ravioli with Creamy Parmesan Cheese Sauce. Wagyu beef. Risotto with Porcini Mushrooms, Red Wine Reduction and Veal Jus. Tiramisu, Candied Peach, warm Chocolate Cake and Homemade Ice Cream in three different flavors.

What to bring: A big appetite.

Scusa is at the second floor of InterContinental MidPlaza Jakarta. E-mail Jakarta@interconti.com.





The British Museum, Russell Street, London

Why go: Check out how the Aztecs lived, marvel at the many mummies on display and ogle the recently installed African Exhibit. The British Museum also houses the famous Rosetta Stone, on which two languages, Egyptian and Greek, were written in three scripts back in 196 B.C.

What to bring: A camera to document your new discoveries—but not all areas of the museums allow photos. If you're a sucker for souvenirs, don't forget your credit cards for the museum shops.

Text and photo by Maui V. Reyes

Tower of London, London

Why go: Fancy seeing where Anne Boleyn and all of King Henry VII's previous wives were beheaded? That's only one of the interesting sites to see in the Tower of London. Hundreds of royal jewels, armor and absolutely anything that has to do with England's centuries-old monarchy is stored here, from torture devices to the royals' private lavatory. A trip to London isn't complete without a stop at this historic place.

What to bring: A camera! While certain areas are no-nos for photo-ops, there are a number of interesting pieces you might want stored in your digicam.

Text and photo by Maui V. Reyes

Thai Boxing Stadium at Bangkok, Thailand

Why go: So you can learn the basics of Muay Thai from Grand Master Yuttana Wongbandue

What to bring: Muay Thai shorts, your energy and a bottle of water

Pink City Jaipur, India

Why go: Experience history and great shopping in one place.

What to bring: A camera, cash and friends to protect you from pushy salespeople

Madame Tussauds, Hong Kong

Why go: This is your chance to come close to your favorite pop culture icons.

What to bring: A camera and your friends for a day of silliness

Pasar Seni (Art Market), Jakarta

Why go: Watch artists paint, check out handicrafts from the many regions of Jakarta and shop for souvenirs for your loved ones.

What to bring: Cash and your camera

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James Bond Island, Phuket, Thailand

Why go: Originally called Koh Ping-gan, Hollywood put the spotlight on this island when it was featured in the James Bond movie "The Man With the Golden Gun." It again received attention when Pierce Brosnan filmed an action scene there for "Tomorrow Never Dies."

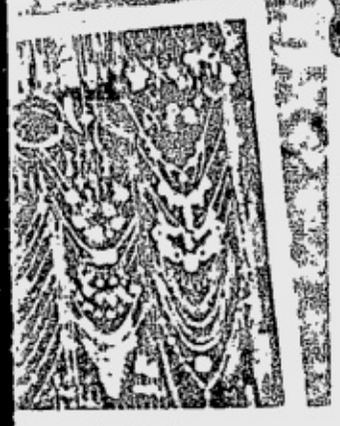
What to bring: A camera

Visit www.phuket.com/island/phangnga.htm.

Musical Fountain, Sentosa, Singapore

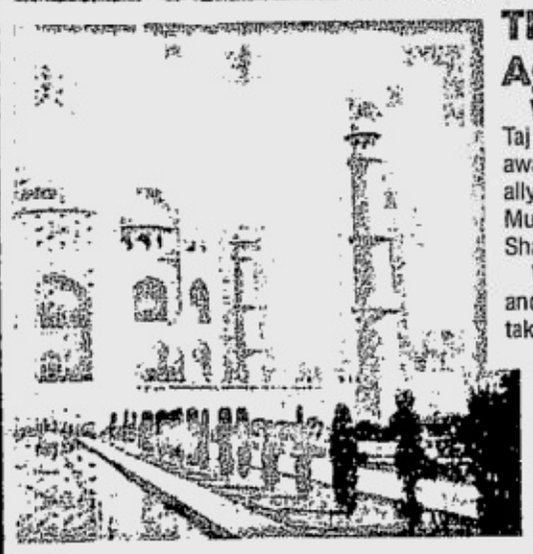
Why go: This amazing sound, light and laser showcase is a must-see.

Check out the rest of Sentosa too—the Nature Walk, Butterfly Park, the Insect Kingdom, Volcano Land, Dolphin Lagoon, Animal and Bird Shows, etc.



ghai, China

go: Because there are count- at stores with major finds that ver be able to buy in Manila to bring: Cash and your bar- skills.



The Taj Mahal, Agra, India

Why go: Let the majestic Taj Mahal take your breath away. The Taj Mahal is actually the mausoleum of Mumtaz Mahal, a tribute by Shah Jahan to his late wife.

What to bring: A camera and shoes that are easy to take off

Amber Fort, Jaipur

Why go: Explore the Eastern medieval lifestyle at leisure and ride elephants around this ancient fort.

What to bring: A camera and your family

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Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. 2F Marvin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City
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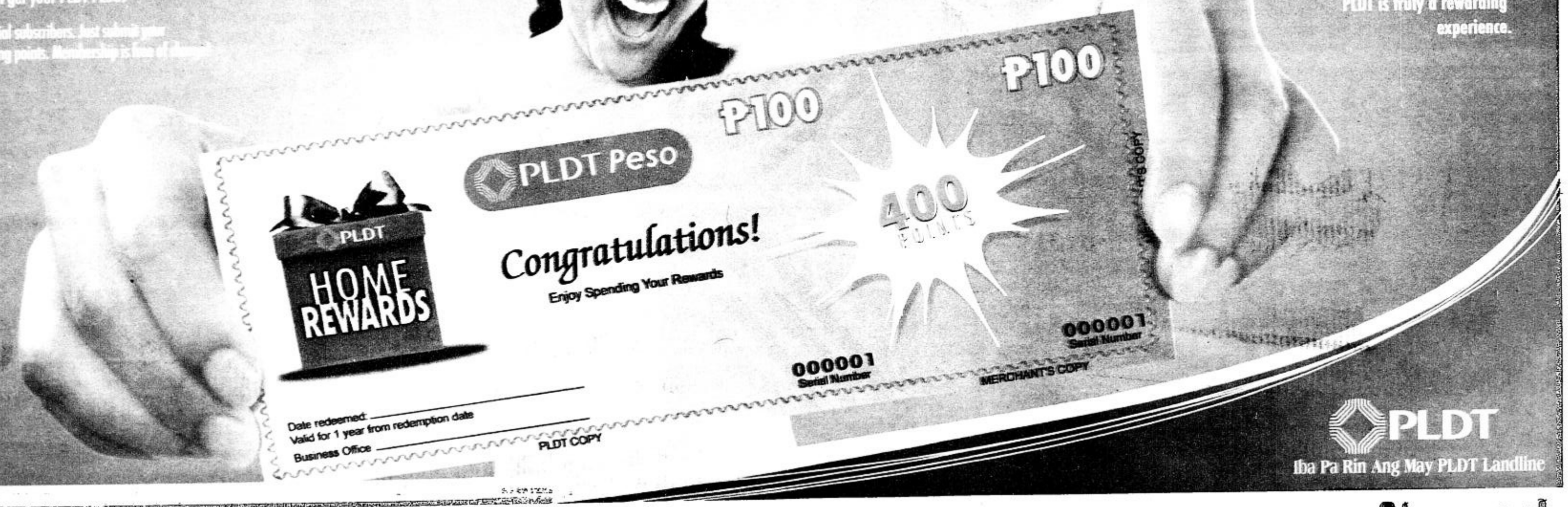

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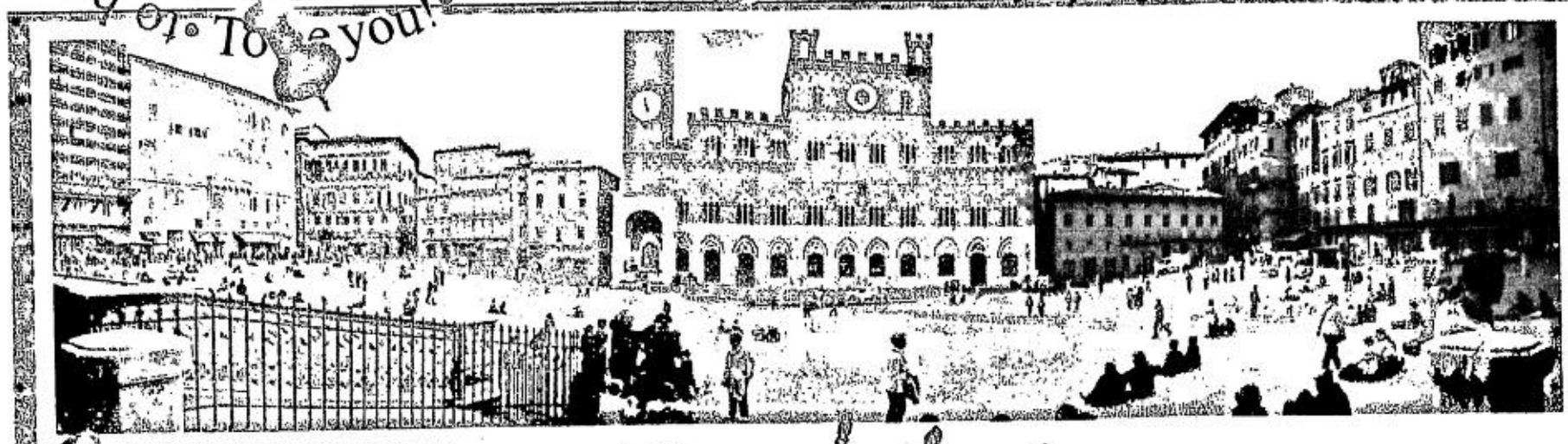


Piazza del Campo, Siena, Italy

Why go: Italy's loveliest piazza, situated in the country's most Medieval city, provides a clear, frontal view of the Gothic town hall, Palazzo Pubblico and the bell tower Torre del Mangia.

What to bring: Food and water, so you can enjoy the piazza just by sitting around and soaking in the sights.

World, here I come!

Text and photos by Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

The Rialto Bridge, Venice, Italy

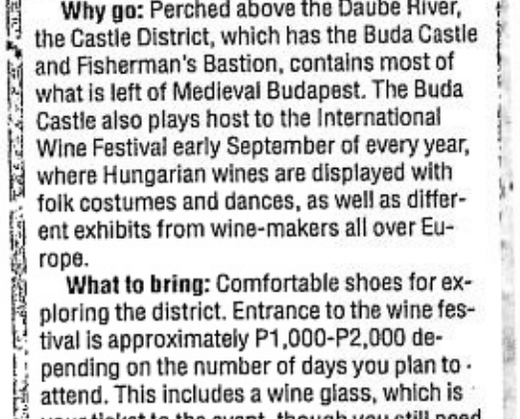
Why go: The heart of the city, once home to Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, it offers a fine view of the Grand Canal, and is lined with gorgeous souvenir shops displaying Venetian masks and Murano glass pieces, among others.

What to bring: Comfortable shoes are necessary since no motor vehicles are allowed in Venice and euro bills for cute souvenirs.

Castle District, Budapest, Hungary

Why go: Perched above the Daube River, the Castle District, which has the Buda Castle and Fisherman's Bastion, contains most of what is left of Medieval Budapest. The Buda Castle also plays host to the International Wine Festival early September of every year, where Hungarian wines are displayed with folk costumes and dances, as well as different exhibits from wine-makers all over Europe.

What to bring: Comfortable shoes for exploring the district. Entrance to the wine festival is approximately P1,000-P2,000 depending on the number of days you plan to attend. This includes a wine glass, which is your ticket to the event, though you still need to buy coupons inside (around P20 per coupon) to be able to sample the vast wine collection.



Camden Market, London, England

Why go: This is the place to go to if you're looking for cheap music-related finds. Band shirts, albums and accessories line up the streets of Camden. Walk the stretch and discover even more little "markets." While most stores close at 5 p.m., local bands usually set up shows at night.

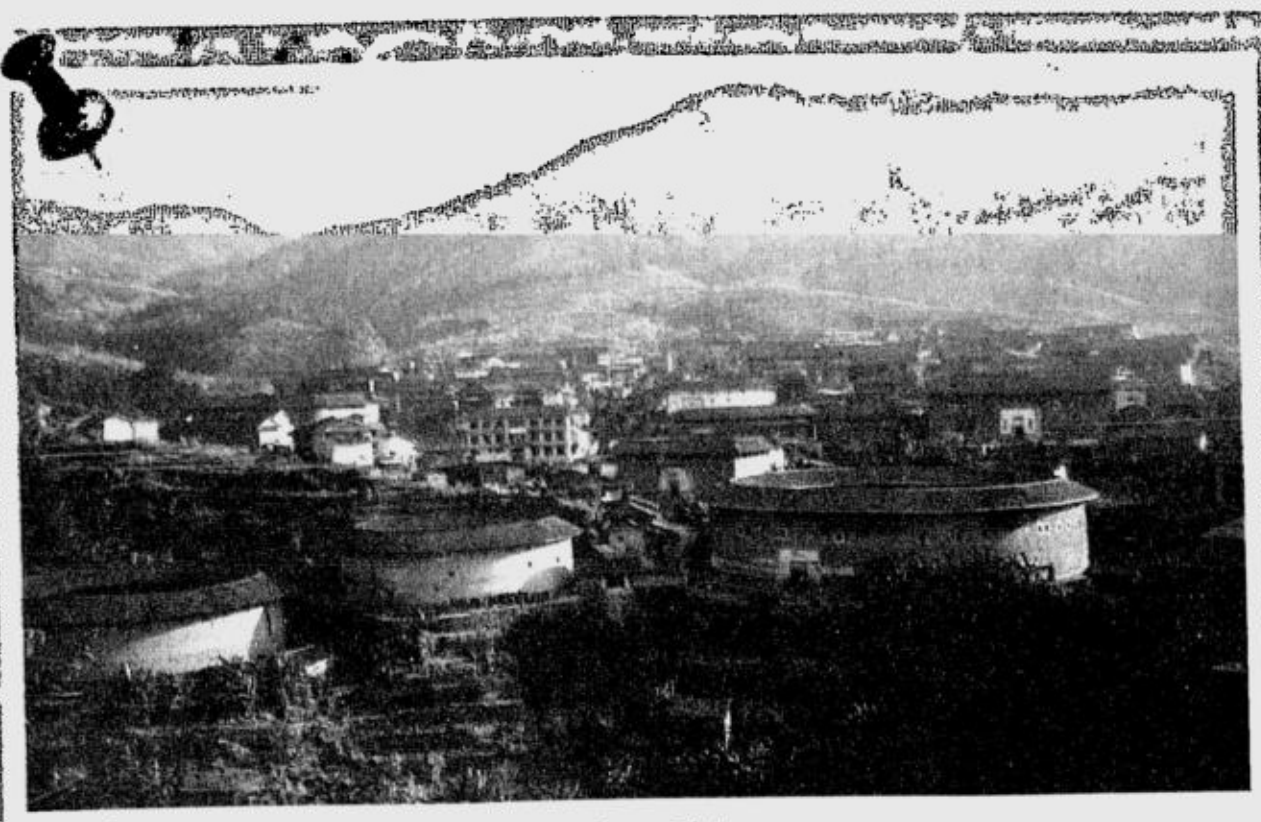
What to bring: Money in small bills, and a secure pocket for your wallet. With punks and goths roaming the streets, Camden Market has earned a rather shady reputation.

Text and photo by Maul V. Reyes

Astronomical Clock in Prague, Czech Republic

Why go: Apart from being located in the preserved Old Town, this gorgeous Gothic structure chimes every hour, with a mechanical Death emptying his hourglass and the aposties following in procession.

What to bring: Your alert mind. The venue is a haven for pickpockets.



Hakka Earth Buildings in Yong Ding, China

Why go: Each Hakka earth building dating from the Tang Dynasty is a small community where natives live like ancient clansmen. The building is windproof, quakeproof, fireproof, well-ventilated and well-lighted.

What to bring: Closed walking shoes, because the terrain can get occasionally rocky and steep. Nights also get witheringly cold.

The Louvre in Paris, France

Why go: One of the world's largest and most renowi
cluding the Mona Lisa.

What to bring: Student IDs or those that indicate yo
trance into the museum. And unless you are a big art l
cide ahead of time which displays you want to see, bec
days.

Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany

Why go: Germany's metropolitan focal point is home to the largest beer-drinking festivity in the world. Every year, from the last week of September to the first week of October, more than seven million people come to bask in the revelry.

What to bring: One wiesn-mass (a mug of beer, approximately one liter) is almost 7 euros, and you will only be served if you have a seat at a table. Bring a little bit more for appetizing fare like pork knuckles, grilled chicken and pretzels, as well as interesting Oktoberfest paraphernalia.

The Trevi Fountain in Rome, Italy

Why go: Rome's largest and most beautiful fountain with the central figure of Neptune, the god of the sea, flanked by two Tritons—one calm, the other restive—has been immortalized in films like "Roman Holiday."

What to bring: A coin to toss into the fountain, following tradition

Caffè P

Why go: K
Caffè Pedroc
artists and int
What to br

St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City

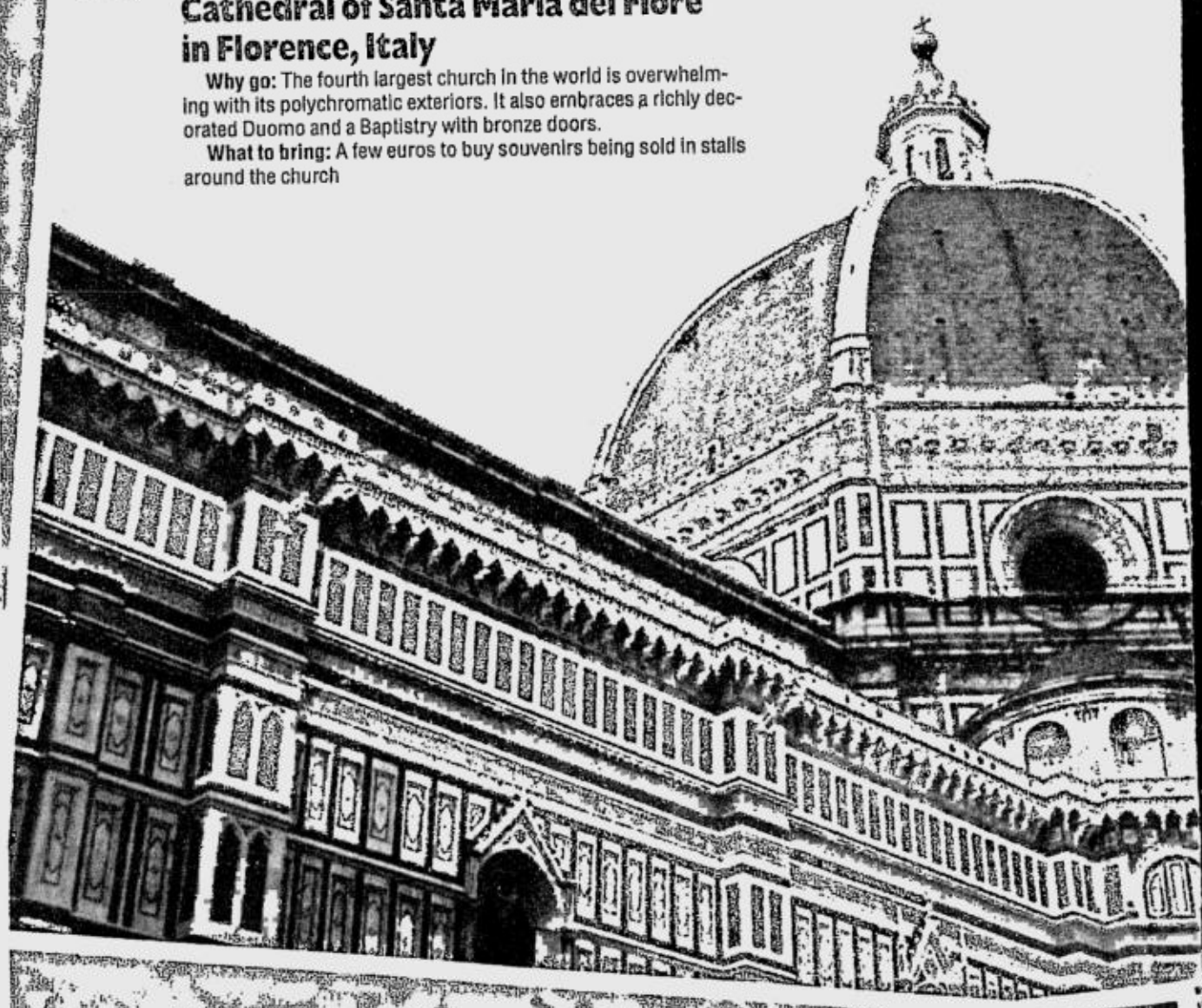
Why go: The Vatican is the only country in the world located in the city of another county. The majestic St. Peter's Basilica is also Catholicism's most sacred shrine, holding hundreds of precious works of art including Michelangelo's Pieta.

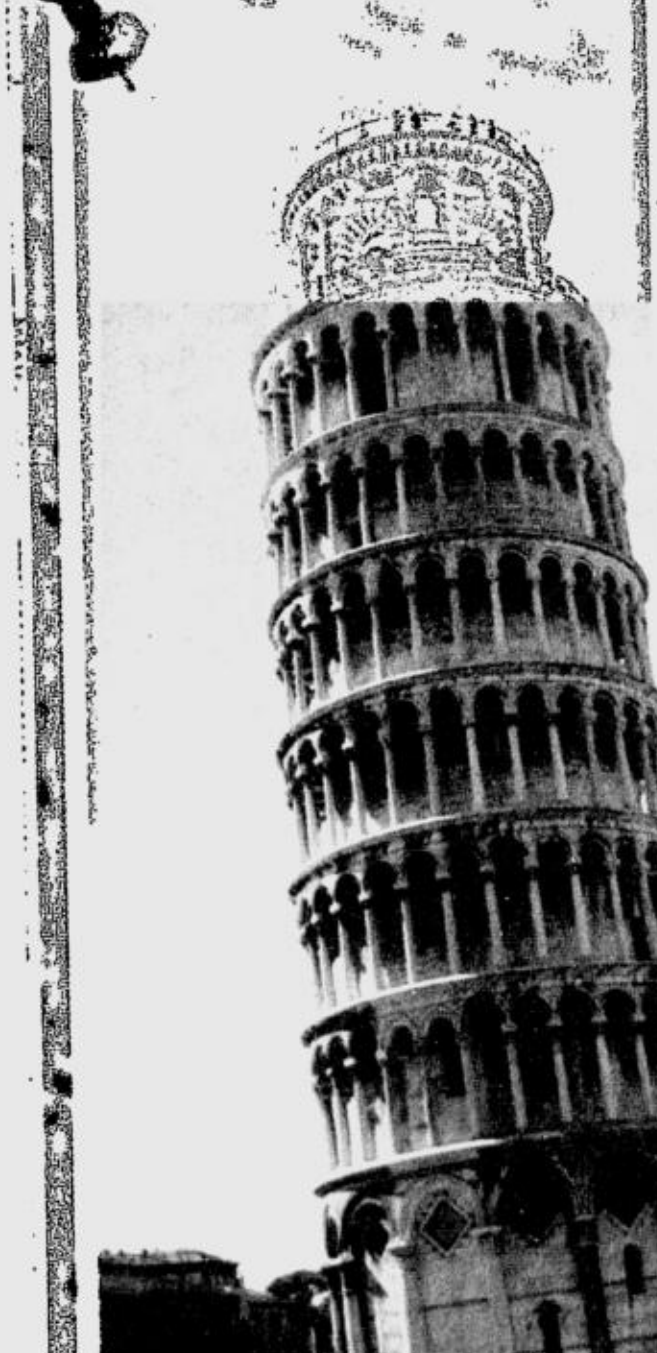
What to bring: A sense of reverence and appreciation for the largest church in the world

Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, Italy

Why go: The fourth largest church in the world is overwhelming with its polychromatic exteriors. It also embraces a richly decorated Duomo and a Baptistry with bronze doors.

What to bring: A few euros to buy souvenirs being sold in stalls around the church





The Leaning Tower of Pisa in Pisa, Italy

Why go: One of the world's most recognizable structures, it began to tilt even before its third floor was finished in 1274.

What to bring: Food for a picnic on the verdant grounds around the tower, or money for the entrance fee to climb inside the edifice

Maria Valeria Bridge in Komárno, Slovakia

Why go: As Slovakia and Hungary are separated by the Danube River, the Maria Valeria Bridge links the two countries and allows you to walk from one to the other.

What to bring: Your passport with a Slovakian and Hungarian visa. Changing currencies is not a problem, as there are money-changers present in both borders.

Nanjing Road in Shanghai, China

Why go: An architectural testament to a colonial past that has undergone urba
renewal and is now a hub of restaurants and boutique shops. Often dubbed as Ch
na's version of New York's 5th Avenue.

What to bring: Comfortable walking shoes, but bring cash anyway as it's likely
several stores will catch your attention

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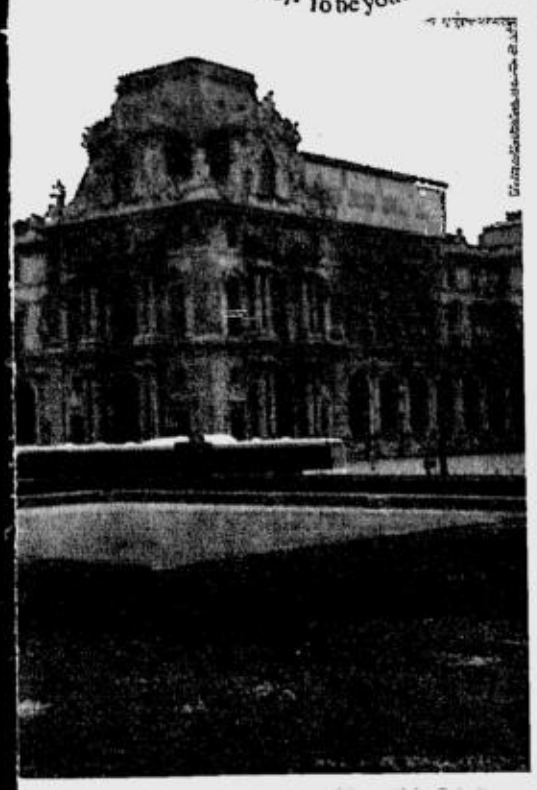


...ed museums with a vast collection of exhibits, in-

...u are below 18 years old, so you will gain free en-
...ver, look up the map of the museum online and de-
...ause to cover the entire Louvre would take many

...drocchi in Padua, Italy

...own throughout Italy as the "café that never sleeps," ...hi has been a popular gathering spot for students, ...llectuals since the mid-19th century.

...g: A good book to complement the café's paninis

Suria KLCC in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

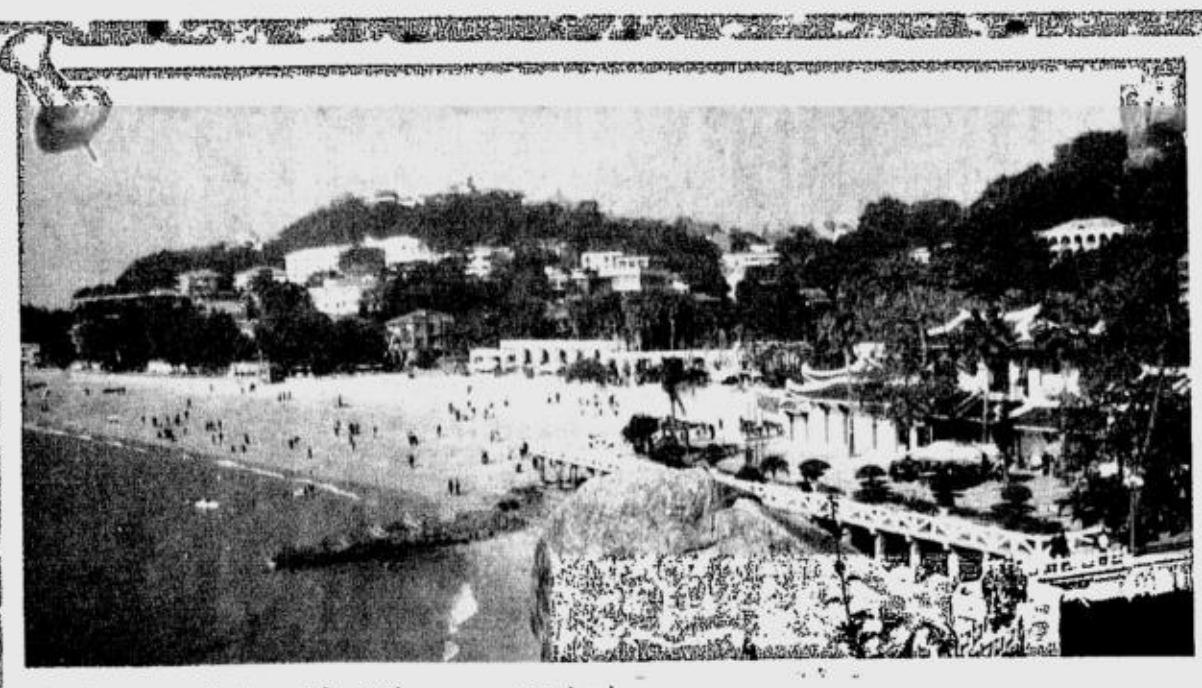
Why go: Malaysia's premier shopping destination right smack at the city center houses popular retailers like Zara and Mango, as well as cafés and restaurants like Chocz and Madame Kwan's.

What to bring: Wads of ringgit, since nothing is cheap in this mall

Demel's Café in Vienna, Austria

Why go: Demel's incredibly divine cakes and hot chocolate is a testament to Viennese café culture.

What to bring: Lots of euros, as the place is quite pricey. A mug of hot chocolate is almost 5 euros and a slice of cake around 4 euros. But they're worth it.



Gulangyu Island in Xiamen, China

Why go: A 10-minute ferry ride away from downtown Xiamen's harbor, Gulangyu Island has the most number of pianos per capita in the world (one in every five homes) and has Asia's largest piano museum. It also has a beach and other attractions.

What to bring: Comfortable walking shoes, since motor vehicles and bicycles are prohibited in the island.

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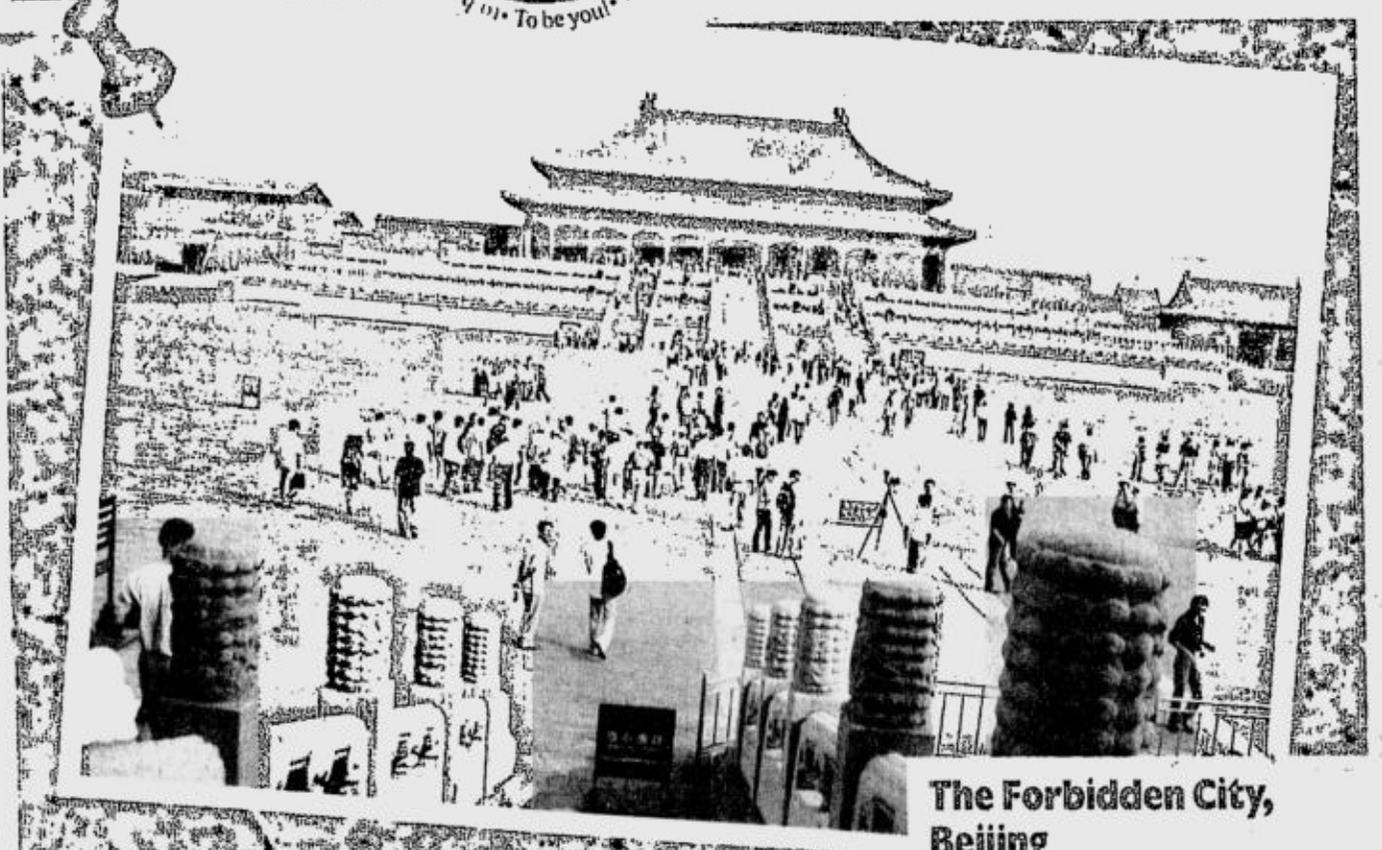
Dongdaemun Market, Seoul, Korea

Why go: One of the biggest retail shopping complexes in Korea, Dongdaemun Market is actually a cluster of different markets and "malls." The place comes alive at night, so make sure you still have some energy left to switch on your power shopping mode at day's end.

What to bring: Lots of cash in small bills, a bottle of water and a big appetite—both for shopping and the street food.

Text and photo by Maui V. Reyes



The Forbidden City, Beijing

Why go: With hundreds of buildings inside the 74-hectare city, the grandeur of this massive "home" to 24 emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties will make you feel like an emperor yourself. It's located at the center of Beijing. The day tour package, which includes Tiananmen Square, the Temple of heaven and Summer Palace, is recommended.

What to bring: Books or travel guides, to help you fully appreciate the experience since each structure has a story. Comfortable shoes since there's a lot of walking involved, a bottle of water, money for souvenirs and a camera.

Text and photo by Tammy David

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Hong Qiao Pearl Market, Beijing

Why go: Haggle heaven! A place to find relatively cheap gadgets, clothes, shoes, bags, toys, Mao memorabilia and, of course, pearls.

What to bring: Cash, credit card and good bargaining skills. Don't fall for the "last price" bluff. *Text and photo by Tammy David*

Causeway Bay in Hong Kong, China

Why go: It is a bustling commercial district offering big department stores like Times Square and Sogo, and also bargains at Jardine's Crescent and Lee Garden Road. It is also lined with popular restaurants, karaoke bars and nightclubs.

What to bring: Comfortable walking shoes, and of course, money for shopping. *Text and photo by Cheryl Tiu*

Ben Thanh Market, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

Why go: Bag-aholics and silk-crazy shoppers will love this place, with its exquisitely embroidered totes, funky yet cheap rubber flip flops and gorgeous silk items in every color and design imaginable—wallets, coin purses, shoes, wraparound pants, shawls, you name it. Check out the wet market side as well, and sample the gigantic fruits, exotic coffee beans and French baguettes in wicker baskets, made Vietnam-style. If your taste buds are craving for some authentic Vietnamese chow, have some lunch or snacks at the various eateries inside.

What to bring: Lots of Vietnam Dong or VND, a securely zippered bag, a hanky or fan (it can get excruciatingly hot inside), and your best haggling skills. Don't pounce on the first item you see. Chances are, the next stall might be selling it for much, much less.

Text and photo by Angela Ignacio

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005

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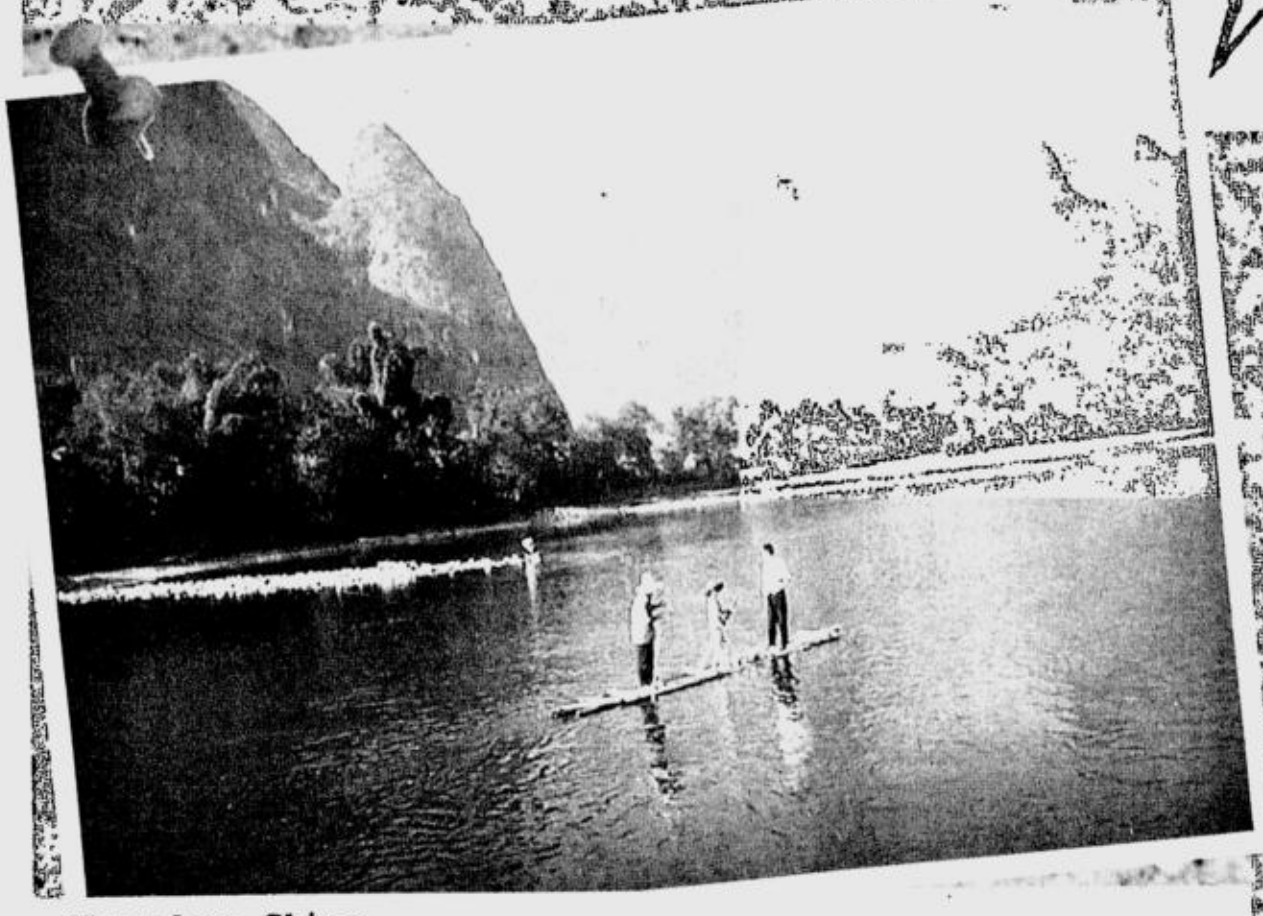

Yangshuo, China

Why go: Guangxi province is home to 1,000-year-old limestone cliffs and caves, and some of the most beautiful scenery in China. Skip the circus that is Guilin and opt for the small-town feel of Yangshuo. While Western Street has already become a regular stop along the backpacker circuit that usually begins in Khao San road in Thailand, the outlying areas still offer opportunities for pure escape.

Hire a good guide and spend a couple of days biking around the countryside, climbing limestone hills, crawling through small crevices in caves, cruising along the Li river, and catching yourself swearing silently at the sheer beauty that surrounds you.

What to bring: light clothing (depending on the time of the year you're going), enough film or storage space for your camera, and liniment for your behind that's sure to hurt after days and days of riding a bike.

Text and photo by Nic Ruffy

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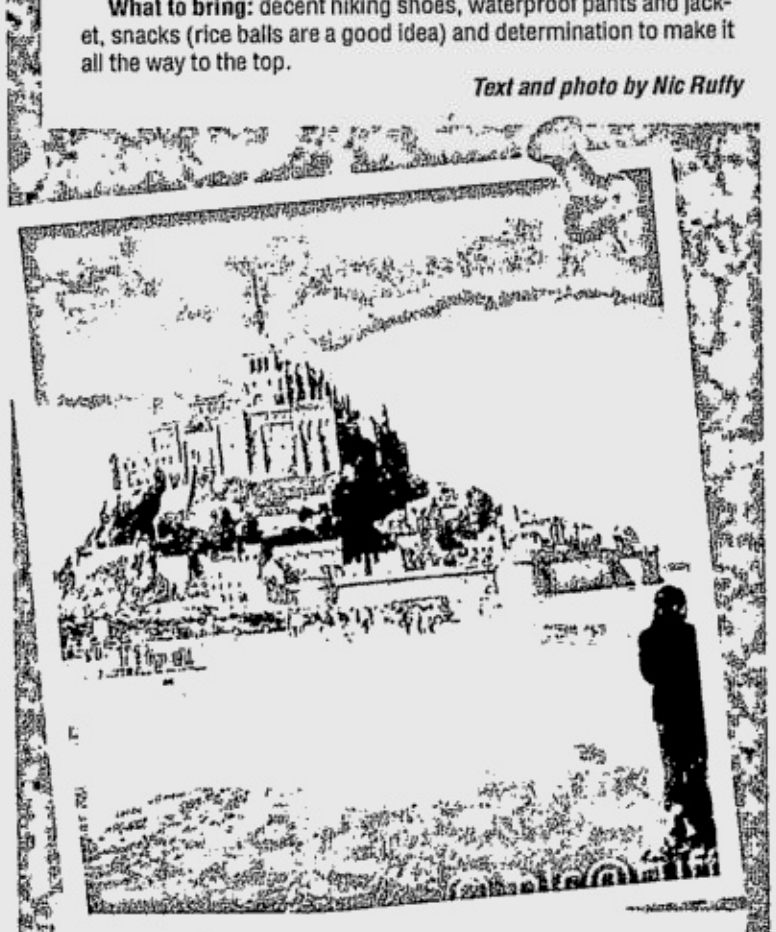
Mt. Fuji, Japan

Why go: They say it's a pilgrimage every Japanese should make at least once in his or her lifetime. The hike up Fuji-san is no easy feat for the casual, out-of-shape non-mountaineer, but the experience is religious. The trek starts at Go-gome (fifth station), and involves five to six hours of uphill climbing along barren, almost alien ground. Several guesthouses that serve extremely overpriced noodles and curry rice (without meat!) dot the path. If you time your climb well, you'll arrive at the peak in time for a spectacular sunrise.

What to bring: decent hiking shoes, waterproof pants and jacket, snacks (rice balls are a good idea) and determination to make it all the way to the top.

Text and photo by Nic Ruffy



Mont St. Michel, Brittany, France

Why go: If a monastery/church dating way before Magellan ever set foot in the Philippines, built on a rock of an island that you can walk to during low tide and which gets surrounded by water once the tide comes in, isn't enough of a reason, there's also the fantastic French countryside and Brittany's coastline to go with it. The view at the top of the rock is definitely worth it. A side trip to nearby Cancale for all the freshly caught oysters and mussels your heart can desire, teamed with a bottle of wine, is a good way to end the day.

What to bring: A rental car or French friends with a car, so you can go anywhere you please. Just cruising along the coastal highway is a joy in itself, and you should be able to find numerous restaurants in between Mont St. Michel and Cancale.

Text and photo by Nic Ruffy

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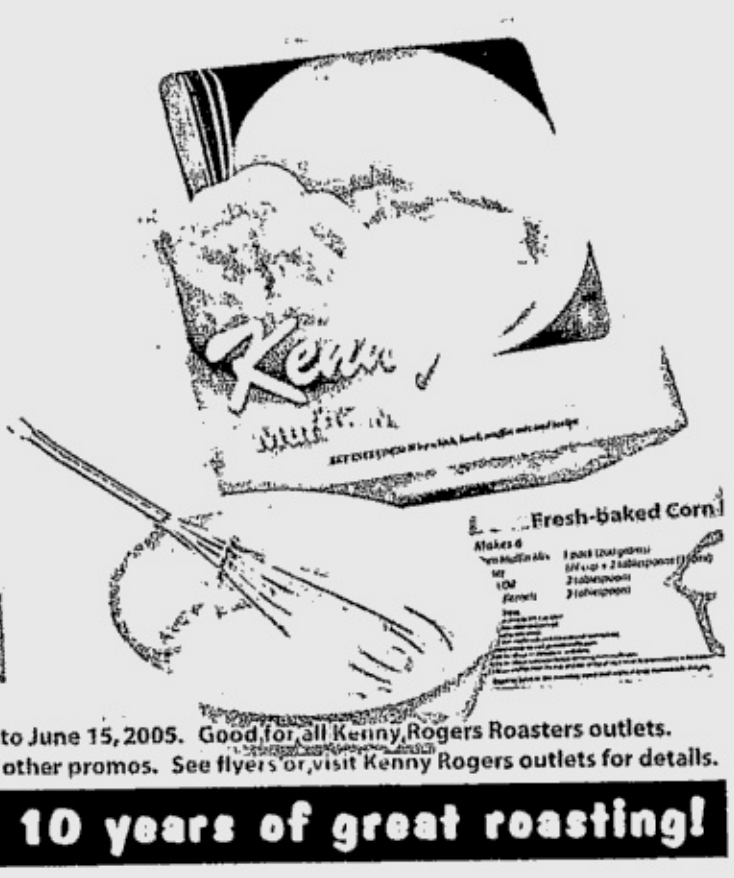

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PHILIPPINE D
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THE FASHION FREAKS

Global fashion haunts

By Yasmine C. Hidalgo
Contributor

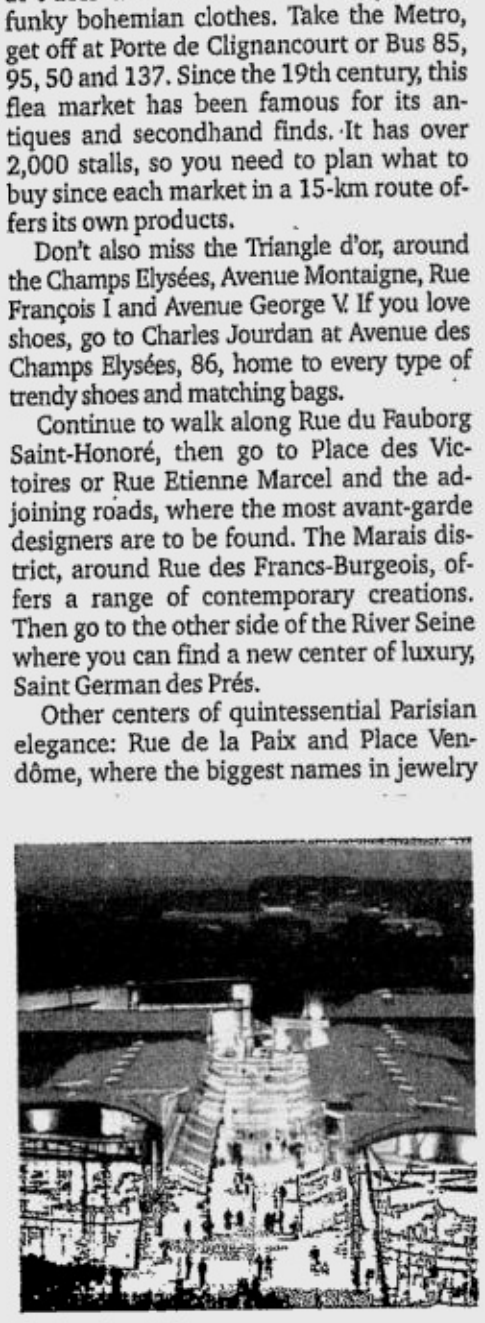
Paris

Where to go: Don't miss the flea market at Puces de Paris Saint-Ouen if you like funky bohemian clothes. Take the Metro, get off at Porte de Clignancourt or Bus 85, 95, 50 and 137. Since the 19th century, this flea market has been famous for its antiques and secondhand finds. It has over 2,000 stalls, so you need to plan what to buy since each market in a 15-km route offers its own products.

Don't also miss the Triangle d'or, around the Champs Elysées, Avenue Montaigne, Rue François I and Avenue George V. If you love shoes, go to Charles Jourdan at Avenue des Champs Elysées, 86, home to every type of trendy shoes and matching bags.

Continue to walk along Rue du Fauborg Saint-Honoré, then go to Place des Victoires or Rue Etienne Marcel and the adjoining roads, where the most avant-garde designers are to be found. The Marais district, around Rue des Francs-Burgeois, offers a range of contemporary creations. Then go to the other side of the River Seine where you can find a new center of luxury, Saint German des Prés.

Other centers of quintessential Parisian elegance: Rue de la Paix and Place Vendôme, where the biggest names in jewelry are based. Lalique, Christofle, Baccarat, Saint Louis and Bearnardaud (tea room) can be found at Rue Royale, Galerie Royale and Place de la Madeleine.



ZWEIBRÜCKEN, Germany

WERTHEIM Village, Germany

Your Paris trip is not complete without a visit to Galerie Lafayette and Printemps, which offers extensive selections of fashion, beauty and home merchandise.

Rome

Where to go: The main shopping streets are Via del Corso all the way to Altar de la Patria and Piazza del Popolo on the other end. You can get here from the Coloseo. Then there is Via Nazionale, which is close to Termini, the train station. There you'll find Benetton, Sisley, Max Mara and stores selling beautiful shoes, not necessarily branded. Check out Intimissimi for lingerie, stockings and swimsuits.

Madrid

Where to go: Calle Princesa is the place to go for clothes, accessories and shoes. Amat and Fabra at Lagasca, 80, also has party footwear in everything from Swarovski crystals to velvet.

At Cristina Castaner at Claudio Coello 51, the Alpargatas is the star product. She also has great shawls and bags. A personal favorite is Farrutz at Serrano 7, with its unique and original creations ranging from bi-color hoes to futuristic or vintage yet functional shoes of all types, materials and color. You also have a choice of bags and leathergoods. For funky shoes, Camper, located at Gran Via 54, is it.

Barcelona

Where to go: The best place to get your Mango outfits are in Barcelona, where Mango stores are all over. For trendy shoes, go to Rambla Cataluña, or at Ed-Shoes at no 131 and other shoe stores in the area.

For high-fashion footwear, go to Muxart at Rosello 230, where shoes are artisan-crafted and very original. For those on a budget, Pelayo street has all types of footwear for all budgets.

Makeup and perfume are the staples of the French chain. Not only is it a one-stop shop for all your *kikay* needs, it is also housed in a beautiful building.

If unique art pieces are your fetish, go to Barrio Gotico in a street called Avinyo. Sophisticated fashion, meanwhile, can be had at a posh mall called L'Illa at Diagonal. Tous is a jewelry brand that's now also into bag manufacturing.

What to bring: Cash, or passport if you're paying by credit card. An alert mind, since thieves are everywhere.

ZWEIBRÜCKEN, Germany

STROGET, Copenhagen, Denmark

Milan

Where to go: Via Montenapoleone and V
la Spiga, which hosts the most coveted fa
ion brands in the world: Bottega Veneta, G
ci, Prada, Salvatore Ferragamo, Sergio Ro
Tod's and Dolce & Gabana.

Furla is found at Vorso Vittorio Emabue
Armani Manzoni is found near the area at
Manzoni 31. Check out the latest Dolce
Gabbana store, which has a barber shop
martini bar, a massage place and the la
fashion for men. But for the best that Italy
to offer under one roof, you won't go wr
with Corso Como.

Copenhagen

Where to go: Copenhagen is a world cap
of industrial design when I lived there. Dan
brands like Bodum have their flagship stores
this city. The works of Danish designers
Arne Jacobsen, Hans Wegner and Poul H
ningsen can be found all over, and Royal Cop
hagen Porcelain is a must-see.

The mecca of Danish interior design is
lums Bolighus. Visit the most famous Scan
navian design houses such as Rosendahl. S
ton, Eva Trio, Trip Trap and Grand Cru. D
forget to check out the hi-fi designer equ
ment of Bang & Olufsen Center.

MGM Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada

Why go: Apart from being the largest hotel-casino in the world with some of the plushest rooms ever, it also has its own theme park. Definitely an establishment to keep all ages entertained.

What to bring: A lot of money, if you decide to check in. However, you can visit most Vegas hotels for free through sidewalks, trams and elevated crosswalks, or maybe for a few dollars through the Strip Trolley, which picks up and drops off passengers at hotel entrances.

Text and photo by Cheryl Tiu

Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, New York

Why go: When you're tired of the Big Apple and want someplace else to unwind, hop on a train at Penn Station at NYC. An hour's ride and several towns later, including a few minutes underwater, you'll be where celebrities let loose for the holidays.

Cold Spring Harbor has something for everybody. For the paparazzi, this is the place to photograph the stars. For those who want to burn money, the fashion boutiques and the antique stores offer a lot of expensive yet hard-to-find pieces. For athletes, the harbor is a great place for kayaking, volleyball and other sports. And for nerds like me, Cold Spring Harbor is home to the DNA Learning Center and The Watson School of Biological Sciences, whose current chancellor, James Watson, was a co-discoverer of DNA.

What to bring: Definitely a camera and extra film or memory sticks. The harbor is simply too beautiful not to capture in photos. If you only have one day, forget the shopping—just go to the lake for a few quiet hours of contemplation. Bring a good pair of sneakers or hiking shoes. A phone wouldn't hurt either, in case you get lost. Finally, bring sports gear and equipment for your day in the sun.

Text and photo by Cathy Young

Grouse Mountain, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Why go: If driving up to Whistler, BC's premier ski capital, is too long a drive, Grouse Mountain, also known as the Peak of Vancouver, is a much closer (and cheaper) alternative, just 15 minutes away from downtown Vancouver. Skiing and snowboarding are premiere winter activities, while traversing the wildlife and lumberjack shows are some of the popular summer options.

What to bring: Cash for the entrance ticket and the usual winter or summer gear.

Text and photo by Cheryl T

Scarborough Faire, the Renaissance Festival in Waxahachie, Texas

Why go: The village transports you back in time to a recreated 16th-century English Village at the time of King Henry VIII. Attractions include jousting demonstrations and quaint shops that showcase glass-blowing, blacksmithing, printing on a Gutenberg Press and delectable fare such as juicy turkey legs and funnel cakes. Only 30 minutes south of Dallas/Fort Worth.

What to bring: A day's pass is less than $20 for one adult. To enhance your experiences, come in costume or rent one at the front gate. (Note: The fair is only open on the weekends of April-May every year)..

Text and photo by Cheryl Tiu

Universal Studios Hollywood, Los Angeles, California

Why go: The world's largest movie studio and theme park brings some of the world's all-time favorite movies to life with you as the star, the moment you visit their sets or strap yourself to the exhilarating rides. One of the most interesting attractions is the Jurassic Park ride—a superior, colossal version of the log ride set at a treacherous height of 84 ft—literally a jolting heart-to-stomach experience.

What to bring: A lot of cash. Apart from the theme park (which prompts the irresistible urge to buy souvenirs), Universal Studios also encompasses Citywalk which is lined with sumptuous restaurants and popular clothing retailers.

Text and photo by Cheryl Tiu

Sapa, Vietnam

Why go: Vietnam is turning out to be an extremely viable alternative to over-touristed Thailand, and the travel infrastructure is a lot better than you think. Sapa is a mountain village only a few hours south of the border from China. The locals are absolutely different from the normal Vietnamese. The Igorots are to the Manila-dweller, and that's a good thing. Accommodation is cheap, opportunities for hiking along the terraces and isolated villages abound and the people are wonderful. The most beautiful aspect of Sapa isn't the scenery, but the local kids, who speak decent English and are more than happy to show you around and will kick your ass in a card game if you let them. If you ever get to visit, say "*Co-ca-co*" and you'll be sure to get a laugh.

What to bring: hiking sandals (it can get muddy, so save the shoes) and a sweater. Cash as well, as pretty much everything you need you can buy, and the market is a great place to get unusual souvenirs.

Text and photo by Nic Rutt

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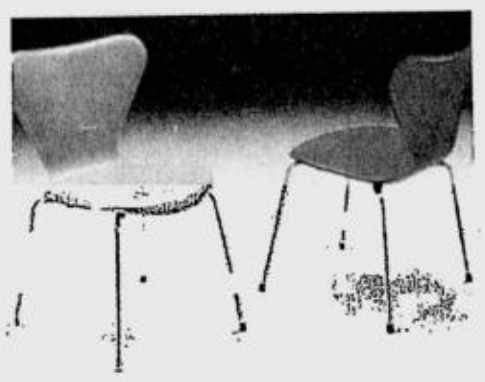
SHOPPING at Seoul, South Korea



ARNE Jacobsen Seven chairs, from Copenhagen

Seoul

Where to go: In Seoul, you can shop any time of the day because the markets are open 24 hours. Dongdaemun Market is the biggest wholesale and retail shopping district in Korea. Itaewon has bags, Namdaemun has clothes, but they are dwarfed by Dongdaemun.

WERTHEIM Village, Germany

Tokyo

Where to go: Tokyo is one of the most expensive cities in the world. Yet, it's the place to find one-of-a-kind paper products, funky and unique clothes and accessories. For traditional and cheap souvenirs, go to Asakusa and Kappabashi Dori. Kimonos and Kabuki makeup are available at the Asakusa area, particularly at the Nakamise Shopping Arcade, right in front of the Asakusa Sensoji Temple. For Japanese tableware, go to Kappabashi Dori for its extensive selection of Japanese chopsticks, tea sets, pottery and lacquerware.

On the other hand, Akihabara has cheap electronics. But you have to check first before buying, since most of the products are made for the Japanese market and may not work in the Philippines.

For funky stuff, there's Harajyuku "Takeshita dori," where young Japanese get their hip fashion finds. More sophisticated clothes are in store at Shibuya and Omote Sando Street. Mitsukoshi, located at Ginza, is for high fashion.

Yoyogi and Meiji Park are the big flea markets in Tokyo, and they're usually held only once a month. Visit http://events.paperlantern.net/month.php for more information on these bargain markets.

The best times to go shopping in Tokyo are in January, when department stores sell bags 5-10 times cheaper than their usual selling price.

Switzerland

Where to go: Foxtown, Mendrisio, bordering Milan. Fashionistas all go to Foxtown to get their designer clothes, shoes and accessories. The place has outlet stores of the biggest names in world

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Old City, Jerusalem, Israel

Why go: Jesus walked these streets back in the Gospel days, so for your "The Passion of the Christ" fix, swing by the Tower of David, the Wailing Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Temple Mount, Mount of Olives and the Dome of the Rock. Amen.
What to bring: A copy of "Lonely Planet Israel" and someone to catch your jaw as it drops to the floor once you walk the ancient streets

Banff and Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada

Why go: This Unesco World Heritage Site offers outstanding heli-skiing and snowboarding in the winter and hiking and camping in the spring and summer. The Canadian Rockies has "mind-blowing" written all over it.
What to bring: Good hiking shoes, a digital camera and food for the chipmunks

Mount Fuji and Hakone Lake, Japan

Why go: Passing above the crater of the volcano, the aerial ropeway ride from Sounzan to Owakudani alone can give you goosebumps. Seeing the majestic Mount Fuji is the crowning glory.
What to bring: A digital video camera and some beer

West Edmonton Mall, Alberta, Canada

Why go: The planet's biggest entertainment and shopping center, West Ed Mall has the world's largest wave pool, 23 water slides, bungee jumping facilities, roller coasters, hotels, 800 shops and a Hooter's. Fun for everyone!
What to bring: All of your family and friends

Text and photos by Gino de la Paz

Dahab, Egypt

Why go: The Arabic word for gold, Dahab is located on the Sinai Penisula bordering Israel and Syria. Excellent place for kitesurfing, windsurfing and hookahs, which are not prostitutes but glass smoking pipes.
What to bring: SPF 70 and lots of bottled water

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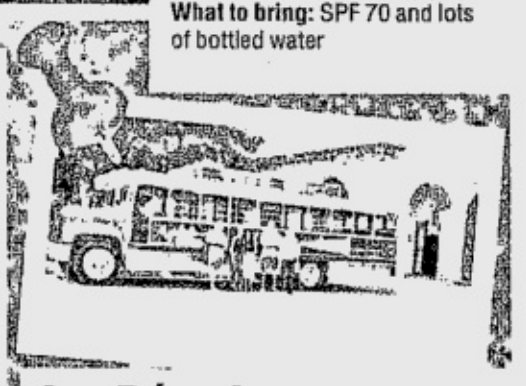

Las Bóvedas, Cartegena, Colombia

Why go: Built in the last years of the 18th century, Las Bóvedas (Spanish for The Crypts) used to be a series of cells in Cartagena's city walls. Now they've been transformed into shops where local artisans sell sculptures, tapestries and other indigenous Colombian art. Other sights to see in the old city are the Palace of the Inquisition, the convent of San Pedro Claver and Plaza Bolivar.
What to bring: A Spanish-speaking buddy like me

The Lanes, Brighton, England

Why go: The oldest part of Brighton, these narrow pedestrian streets are home to charming restaurants, comedy clubs and specialty stores. Aside from skate wear and rare CDs and organic food at Infinity, one-of-a-kind T-shirts are available at Traid (Textile Recycling for Aid and International Development). Traid is a registered charity that collects, recycles and sells secondhand clothes to fund projects for some of the world's poorest communities.
What to bring: A hearty appetite for the offbeat, and maybe four credit cards

Global fashion

From page F2

fashion: Bally, Bruno Magli, Alberta Ferretti, Cerruti, Diesel, Dolce & Gabbana, Church, Fratelli Rossetti, Gianni Versace, Guess, Gucci, Helmut Lang, Mariella Burani, Missoni Sport, Miu Miu, Pepe Jeans, Prada, Prada Sport, Replay, Salvatore Ferragamo, Tommy Hilfiger, Trussardi, Valentino and Yves Saint Laurent. The good thing is that it is also open on Sunday, 11-7 p.m.

Germany

Where to go: Designer outlets Zweibrücken -Londoner Bogen 10-90, Zweibrücken: With over 55 brands to choose from, this shopping haven can take a whole day to thoroughly check out. Here, Mango and Benetton outfits can cost from 5-10 euros only! You will also find Versace, Trussardi Jeans, Lacoste, Nike, Quicksilver, Mandarina Duck, Home Accessories of Missoni, Burberry and Swarovski all in one roof.

Wertheim Village, Almosenberg, Wertheim

Wertheim Village is built like a Medieval German village, but the stores sell designer clothes from the previous seasons at affordable prices. Available brands include Armani, Versace, Trussardi Jeans, Bally, Calvin Klein Underwear, Tommy Hilfiger, Dockers, Levis, Oakley, Timberland, Nike, Mandarina Duck, Oakley, Puma to famous tableware Rosenthal.

The author currently works as PR & Communications Officer at The Westin Philippine Plaza. She has lived in Barcelona, Budapest, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Helsinki, Madrid and Tokyo as a student and as a marketing communications professional, and has traveled to over 24 countries in the past 12 years. E-mail her at yasminehidalgo@yahoo.com

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Are you ready for this adventure?

Seven individuals will explore the Philippines in 7 days. You can do the same with Seair's Adventure Pass

By Pam Pastor

APART from launching the new Dornier 328, which can fly you to Boracay in just 35 minutes, Seair is celebrating its 10th anniversary by introducing the Seair Adventure Pass.

The Adventure Pass (worth P16,500), which will be available until May 30, entitles the bearer to an unlimited number of domestic flights on any regular Seair route for 45 days. That means you can go to Camiguin, Caticlan (Boracay), Clark, Cotabato, Busuanga, Cuyo, El Nido, Puerto Princesa, Taytay (Palawan), San Jose (Occidental Mindoro), Siargao, Zamboanga, Jolo and Tawi-Tawi every day if you want.

At the launch, Seair introduced the participants of the very first Seair Adventure Race, dubbed "Buong Pinas in Seven Days."

This week, these seven individuals will travel to different destinations in the Philippines including Camiguin, Boracay, Surigao City, Siargao, Cebu, Clark, El Nido, etc. and face challenges both physical and mental at every leg. At the end of the race, one male contestant and one female contestant with the highest points will be proclaimed winners and receive over P100,000 worth of prizes, including Motorola phones and platinum-memberships at Red Corner.

Meet the participants in our pages, pick who you think will win and win prizes of your own.

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HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're dedicated to what you believe in. You're independent and self-sufficient. You want the results, not the glory. (Therefore, you'll work behind the scenes.) Family life means a lot to you: Your home is your castle. You know your limitations and function to the best of your ability within them. Work hard this year for rewards in 2006. Birthdate of: Ulysses S. Grant, US president; Jack Klugman, actor; Coretta Scott King, civil-rights activist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You feel enthusiastic about something today. You want everyone to know all about it. In particular, you're keen to share this news with a friend or partner.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be cautious when setting deadlines or making estimates at work today. It's very easy to promise more than you can deliver.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): If someone promises you the sun and moon today, you'd better take this with a grain of salt. Mercury opposes Jupiter today, and this makes everyone overly confident and optimistic.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Make sure that you are down-to-earth and realistic about your projections and about what you can achieve in the future. This applies to both your career and your home life.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Travel and educational plans look marvelous! Work with what you have. If you're tempted to expand in some way today, don't.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Don't bet the farm today. You're inclined to spend other people's money too rashly. Generosity is a good thing, but there is such a thing as idiot compassion.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's a good idea to temper your conversations with others today. Either you or someone else might go wildly overboard about something. Don't bite off more than you can chew.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You are exceedingly optimistic about something at work today. Your optimism could be well-founded. However, be careful of situations that are just pie in the sky.

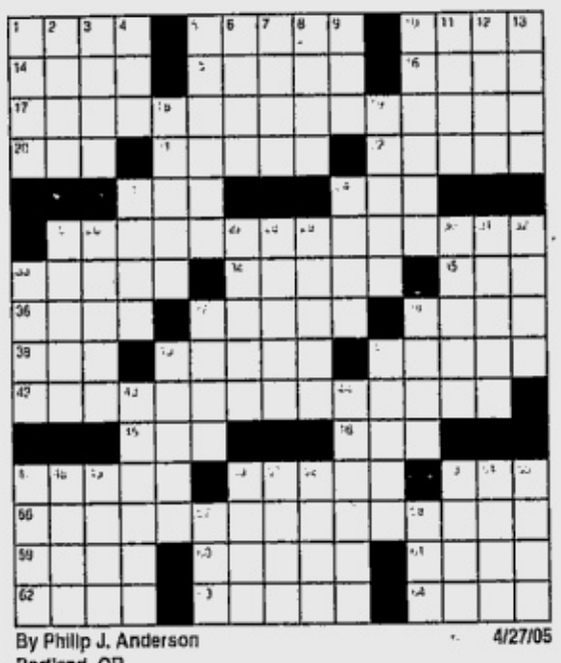
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Interruptions on the home front might make you go overboard socializing or helping children. Your reach often exceeds your grasp. (The word "failure" is not even in your vocabulary.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Because yours is such a sensible sign, your optimism about family, real estate and domestic affairs is probably justified. Nevertheless, if you have a funny feeling that something is fishy, it is!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Don't make promises to others that you can't keep, especially related to publishing, travel, education and the law. Conversations with siblings are particularly upbeat and friendly.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be careful with your money today. You're really tempted to throw it around. Unless you have found the elusive money tree, curb your impulses a bit!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

4/27/05

ACROSS
1 Entreaty
5 Hindu teacher
10 Crooned
14 Korea/China border river
15 "__ of Athens"
16 Zeno of __
17 Take a big chance
20 Nice summer?
21 Deputy
22 Countertenors
23 Upper limb
24 Three in Trieste
25 Take a big chance
33 H.S. dances
34 Meara and Bancroft
35 Bagel topper
36 Dumbo's wings
37 Gather gradually
38 Pierre's father
39 Perform
40 Rude ones
41 1st letters
42 Take a big chance
45 Aged
46 Church sister
47 Shorthand, in short
50 Book div.
53 Election winners
56 Take a big chance
59 Part of ABM
60 Wynonna's mom
61 Malayan outrigger
62 Part of a hammerhead
63 Thus far
64 Hiking housing

DOWN
1 Combustible pile
2 Cafe au __
3 Word in a threat
4 Arctic seabird
5 Mark of infamy
6 Marriage partner
7 Prayer closer
8 Ring around a fortress
9 Travelers' stop
10 Merchant
11 Stepped down
12 "Finding __" (2003 animated hit)
13 Chatters
18 Capers
19 Pub game
23 Donations for the poor
24 Subsequently
25 Destruction
26 Principal artery
27 Eagle's claw
28 Like some gases
29 Grind, as one's teeth
30 Derived from oil
31 __-cochere (sheltered entrance)
32 Alimony recipients
33 Little legumes
37 Well-behaved
38 Nabokov novel
40 Under
41 North Slope dweller
43 South China Sea gull
44 Sense
47 Trade
48 Musical sound
49 Art Deco artist
50 Sch. groups
51 Sailor's call
52 Eternal City
53 About
54 Las Vegas light
55 Color-man's comment
57 Actress Claire
58 To the point

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

O	L	I	O		B	R	A	E		S	W	A	R	M
H	E	A	D		L	O	I	S		C	I	D	E	R
M	I	N	D	Y	O	U	R	P	S	A	N	D	O	S
				O	N	E	S		A	L	E			
I	S	L	A	N	D	S		R	U	D	D	I	E	S
S	C	O	L	D	S		P	E	C	S		L	O	U
M	A	R	I	E		T	I	M	E		A	E	O	N
	L	E	A	R	N	Y	O	U	R	A	B	C	S	
I	L	L	S		O	P	U	S		P	O	T	T	Y
D	O	E		A	V	E	S		S	O	I	R	E	E
S	P	I	E	L	B	E	R	G		O	L	I	A	S
			J	A	N		E	A	R	L				
D	U	T	I	S	A	N	D	C	R	O	S	S	I	S
A	L	E	C	K		A	N	T	E		A	T	O	P
D	E	L	T	A		B	A	I	L		M	Y	N	A

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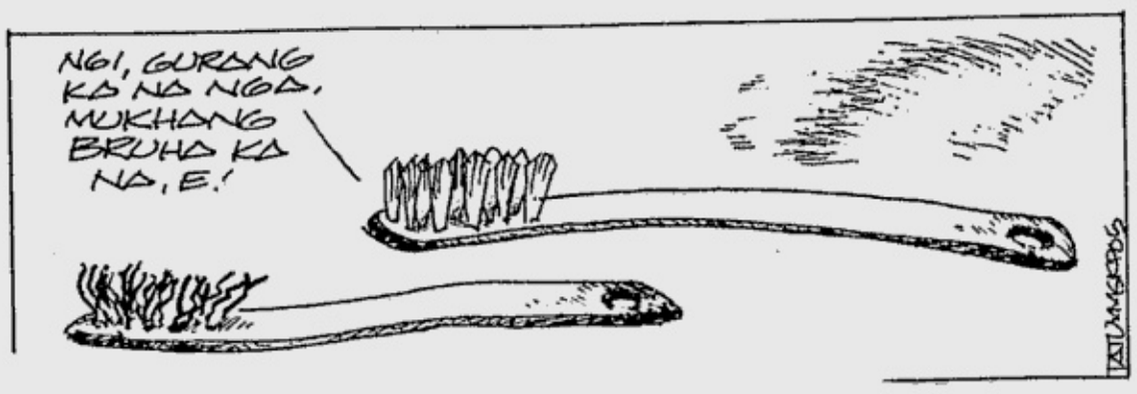
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

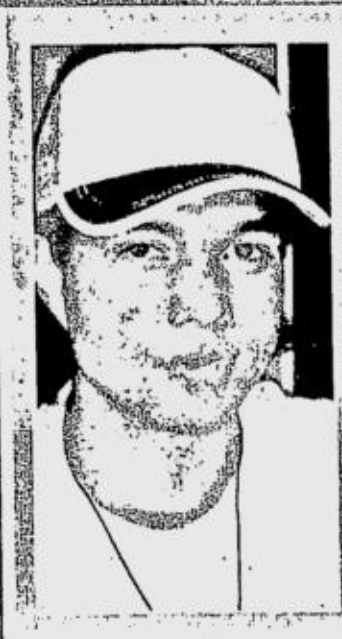


the race participants

To be you!

Name: Jethro S. Alberto
Age: 18
Homebase: Muntinlupa City
School and course: DLSU-Main, Civil Engineering
Interests: Sports, studies, watching movies, boxing, wall-climbing, traveling
Travel history: Explores different beaches around the Philippines
Why he joined: I want to join the adventure race to add a little spice into my life. I'm a very adventurous person and I will try anything that sounds interesting and fun. I really love going to places I have never been to and I'm the type of person you can't keep in one place for a long time. Maybe because I haven't found a place yet that I can call my own little paradise. I hope this event will help me find that place.

Name: Jerizza Jayne Carrillo
Age: 20
Homebase: Parañaque City
School: Assumption College, major in Media Production
Interests: Butterflies, photography, wall climbing, taekwondo, traveling
Travel history: Goes to Cebu once a month
Why she joined: "I am an extrovert. I like to travel and see new beautiful things and learn about different cultures. This adventure race is a very good opportunity for me to travel and meet different people. I crave for challenge, and a healthy competition will do me really good. Plus, I am an adrenaline junkie! So I will definitely love this experience."



Name: Raphael Kiefer
Age: 20
Homebase: Makati City
School: Ateneo de Cagayan
Interests: Outdoors, adventure, reading, movies, travel
Travel history: Travels where his work takes him
Why he joined: "Three reasons: First, because the experience of traveling is not something one can just buy but is something one has to live through. Second, I live for new experiences and try my best to make a habit out of it. Third and most importantly, I love challenging myself. If it's difficult, I want to try it. If it's dangerous, I'm there!

Name: JC Barbasa
Age: 20
Homebase: Quezon City
School and course: De La Salle University, Manufacturing Engineering Management
Interests: Billiards, wall climbing and traveling
Travel history: Has visited Cebu, Subic, Bataan, Baguio, Hong Kong and China
Why he joined: Joining this game is a huge pleasure for me because I love to experience the fast game play and excitement that it involves. The speed and accuracy with which you must work to win the game is amazing and challenging.

Name: Arnold B. Galang
Age: 20
Homebase: Quezon City
School and course: University of Santo Tomas, Business Administration
Interests: Basketball, Swimming, Eating, any kind of sports
Travel history: Hits the road during summer and sembreak
Why he joined: I just want to have fun and have a memorable vacation. I really like adventures. I'm up for challenges, and it will help me become more confident with myself. This event may include activities which I haven't done before, so I'll be doing new things, and that's exciting!

Name: LC Genesis So
Age: 19
Homebase: Manila
School and course: Chiang Kai Shek College, Marketing
Interests: I enjoy listening to music, playing badminton, hanging out with my friends and meeting new people. I love traveling and exploring new places.
Travel history: Travels twice a year within the country, has been to Laoag, Vigan, Baguio, Pangasinan, Subic, Clark, Laguna, Batangas, Puerto Galera, Boracay, Bacolod, Cebu
Why she joined: I know that being part of the adventure team will be fun. Aside from traveling and exploring the islands of the country, I will be able to interact with people and live through their culture. In addition, I enjoy watching reality shows. Oftentimes, I wonder if I can be as competitive as them. With this contest, I'd be able to face my fears and overcome them through many challenges. I know I'll learn a lot of things here that cannot be learned elsewhere.

Name: Ma. Patricia Alexandra V. Limjoco
Age: 20
Homebase: Alabang
School: DLS-College of Saint Benilde, BSBA-CA
Interests: Drawing, Painting, Wall climbing, Surfing the Internet, Cooking, Baking, Reading and Writing
Travel history: Has gone to Singapore, Hong Kong, Bangkok and some places around the Luzon and Visayas region
Why she joined: I don't come off as a very sporty or rugged person. I don't mean that I'm fragile or easily flustered. You just won't see me finishing a triathlon anytime soon. I'm the type of person you'd have to drag to the gym just to exercise. Yes, I'm quite lazy in that aspect. But, there are other traits in me that find the prospect of joining an adventure team an experience of a lifetime. Joining means bringing myself into an environment I'm not familiar with and being with people I've never met before. That sounds like loads of fun and a challenge I want to live up to. Since I don't really do these types of activities, I want to see just how far I can go. I have personal questions about myself that I feel can be answered through this adventure.

Who do you think will win?

It's time to bring out your crystal ball

TELL us who you think will win this adventure and win exciting prizes. Choose one female and one male winner and e-mail us their names along with your name, age, school/office and contact info. If your guess is correct, you will be eligible to join the raffle. One lucky reader will win a six-month membership at Red Corner while another winner will get a Seair Adventure Pass. Send your entries to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph.

Summer Sale
Stripped down up to 70%.
April 27-30

POWER PLANT MALL

Anne Klein • Art Elements • Aura Athletica • Babo @ HIP • Bally • Bass • Bayo • Blush Hour • Bufini • Candy Corner • Carbon • Chocolate Clothing Co. • cK Calvin Klein • cK Underwear Classic Charmz • Cole Haan • Croco-Kids • Diesel • DKNY • Dockers • Don't Miss @ HIP • D-Tour @ HIP • FCUK • Fila • Fino • Gingersnaps • Guess • Guess Kids • Hot Pink • Human Jessica • K & Company • Kamiseta • Kenneth Cole • Kidz Station • L Timestudio • La Compagnie Des Petits • Levi's • Lush • MakeRoom • Marion Godart • Manthe' Francois Girbaud • Marlboro Classics • Maxiworks • Michelis • Mico • Mimi Cosmetics • Mosaic Men • Mosaic Women • Nine West • Nothing But Water • Nullah • Officine • Orange Juice • Paperie • PCX • Philippe Charriol Play & Display • Preview @ HIP • Proline • Salvatore Ferragamo • Shoe Salon Co. • Stoked, Inc • The Body Shop • True Value • Tyler • Vero Cuoio • Watch Republic • Whimsy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2bU!'s Feel the Force with Canon promo

CANON collectible jacket

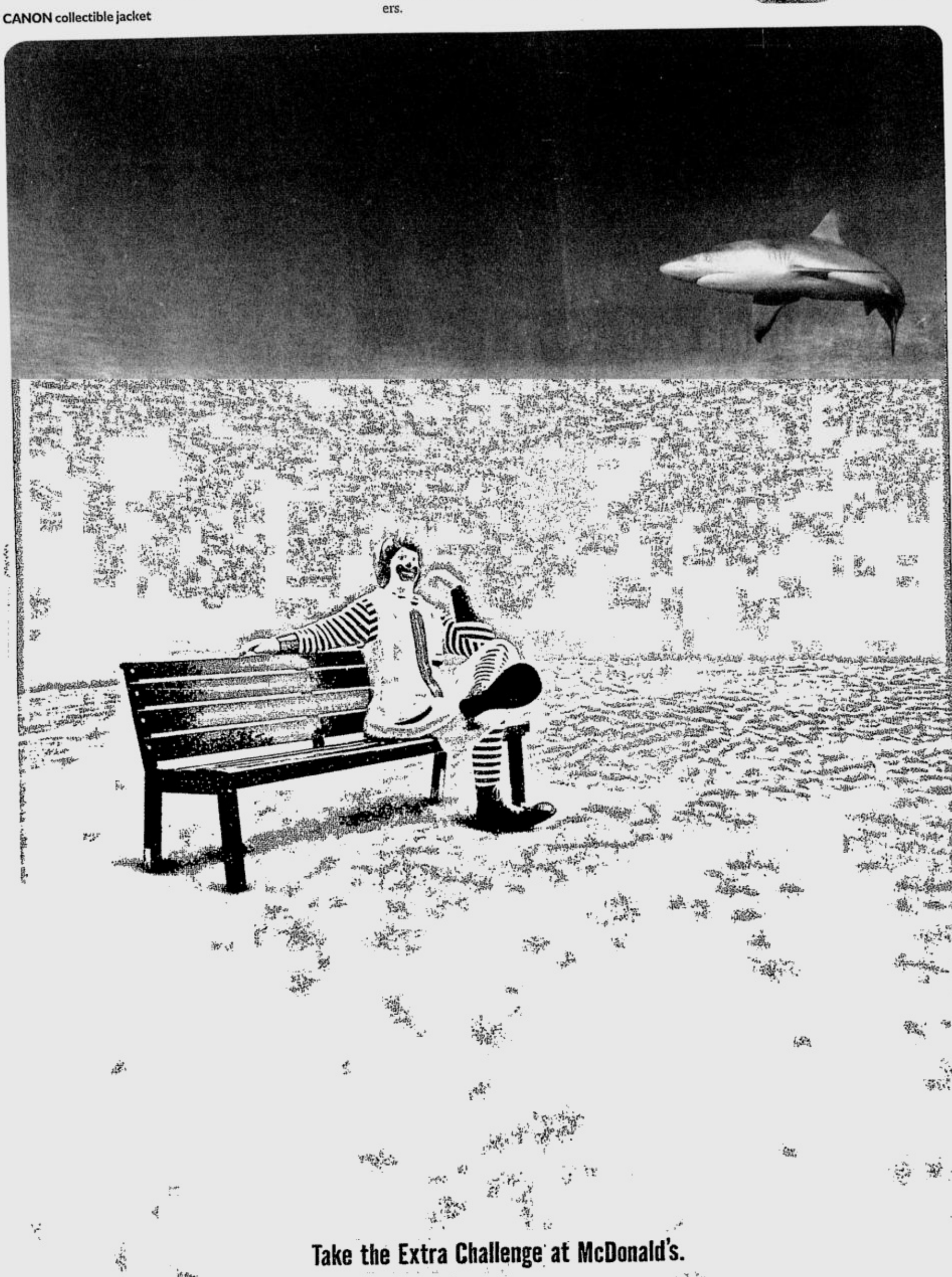
ANOTHER George Lucas masterpiece is about to hit the big screen! To help rev up your excitement, 2bU! and Canon are giving away "Star Wars" goodies to 10 lucky winners each week.

Winning is easy. Just choose your favorite Canon product—camera, printer, scanner, it's up to you—and tell us how you've felt the force of Canon in your life.

E-mail your answers to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph along with your name, age, school/office and contact info. Be as creative as you want.

We will be giving away 20 "Star Wars" lunch caddies, 10 "Star Wars" trolly bags, 10 "Star Wars" Jedi clip watches, five "Star Wars" collectible executive jackets, 10 "Star Wars" thumb drives and five "Star Wars" MP3 players.

CLOCKWISE from above: thumb drive, MP3 player, Jedi watch and lunch caddy



Join the 2bU! Summer Camp

TWENTY school papers. Sixty young journalists. Three days of fun.

Sixty young journalists from 20 different school publications will be invited to join the 2bU! Summer Camp. If you want you and other staffers of your school paper to join in on the fun, send us copies of the best issues of your school paper or magazine. We guarantee three days of excitement and education, with excellent speakers, workshops and group activities. Participants will also get the chance to become 2bU! Editors for a Week.

Send your entries to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Address them to Hazel Soriaga. For inquiries, call Ching dela Cruz at 8978808 local 259 or 239 or e-mail cmdelacruz@inquirer.com.ph

Win 'American Idol' goodies!

WE at 2bU! are still mourning the loss of our favorite Anwar Robinson. Now that he's gone, we don't know who to root for. Constantine? Carrie? Bo?

This week, we have six more aspiring idols to watch. Who are you rooting for?

To add even more fun to this season's American idols, 2bU! and Star World have been giving away exclusive "American Idol" premium items.

E-mail your answers to the following questions to americanidol_on_starworld@yahoo.com. The first five people who will send correct answers will win "American Idol" goodies.

Week of April 25, 2005

1. Who was the runner up on AI's 1st season?
2. Which idol finalist is a music teacher?
3. Who is the youngest finalist in Season 4?
4. Who are the remaining six finalists?
5. Which contestant belongs to New York City?

Catch "American Idol" on Star World every Wednesday at 4 p.m., 8 p.m., 11:30 p.m.; Thursdays at 11 a.m., 4 p.m., 8 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.; and Fridays at 2:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Winners for Week of April 18:

1. Joyce Masalunga
2. Irwin Lagman
3. Juno Rosales
4. Ryan Badiola
5. rehi129

Winners will be notified on how they can claim their prize.

We've got winners!

HERE are the winners of 2bU! and Plains & Prints promo.

What makes your summer complete? We asked you. Here are is the winning entry:

Grand prize winner: Aileen R. Pangilinan of Quezon City

Prize: P5,000 gift certificate from Plains & Prints

"For a medical student, summer means a break from books, exams, the labs, and the wards. Of course, the break would be used to spend time with your family and friends to make up for your unavailability for the rest of the year. The free time would also be spent restoring your energy levels back to normal in time for the next school year's ordeals.

"For me, summer wouldn't be complete without taking that time off to help other people as well. Summer is also known as the time for medical missions and community immersions. And my summer wouldn't be complete if I pass of the opportunity to indulge in these activities as I meet new people from all walks of life. Joining these community-oriented activities gives me a sense of fulfillment as I let apathy take the back seat and I become involved.

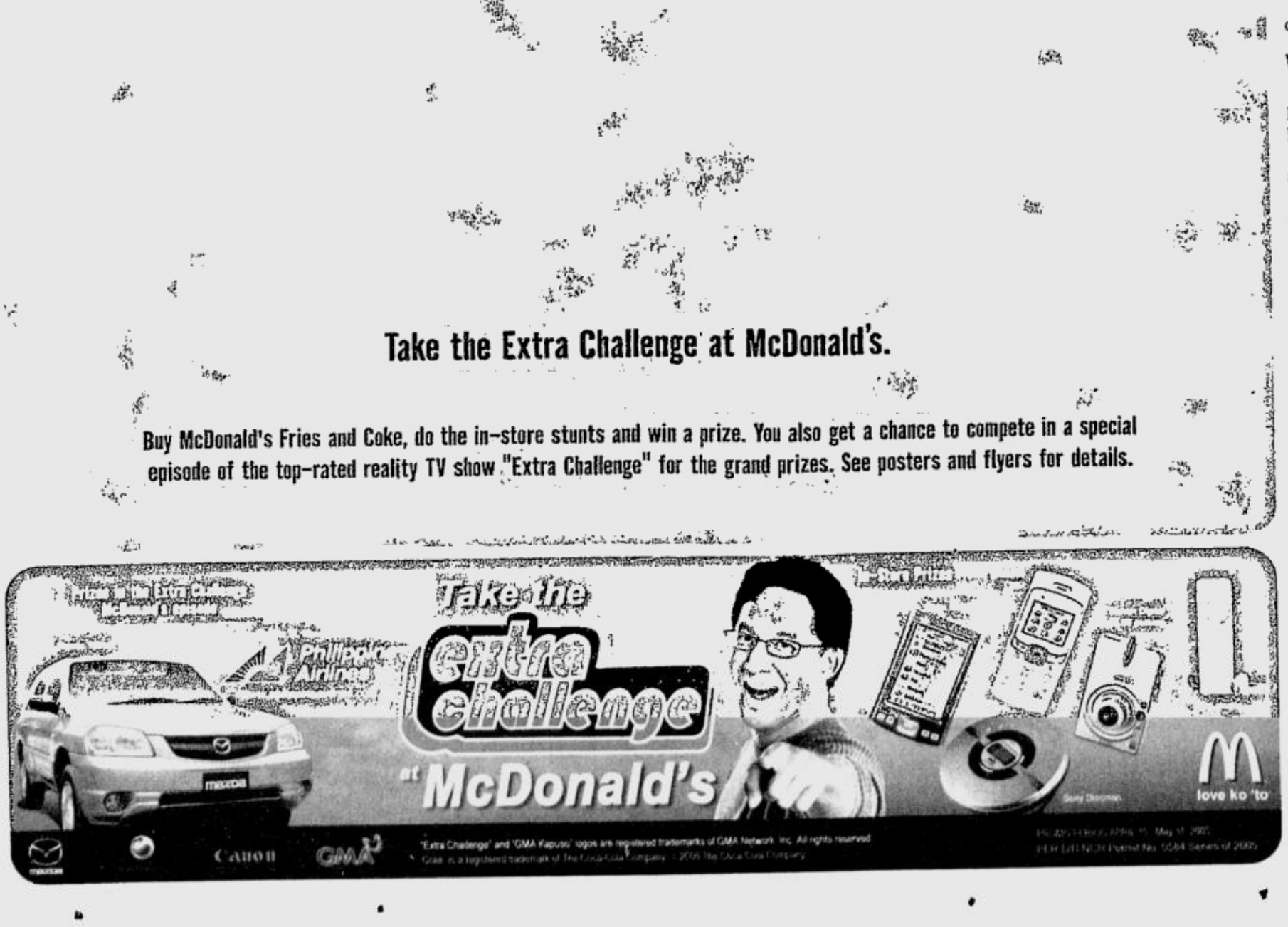
"It is in the spirit of reaching out do I not only complete my summer, but in doing so, I also embark in the process of fulfilling a long-term goal of completing myself."

Second prize winner: Mary Dorothy Jose of Marikina City

Third prize winner: Hana San Luis of Marikina City

Prize: Gift packs from Plains & Prints

Winners will be notified on how to claim their prizes.



Take the Extra Challenge at McDonald's.

Buy McDonald's Fries and Coke, do the in-store stunts and win a prize. You also get a chance to compete in a special episode of the top-rated reality TV show "Extra Challenge" for the grand prizes. See posters and flyers for details.

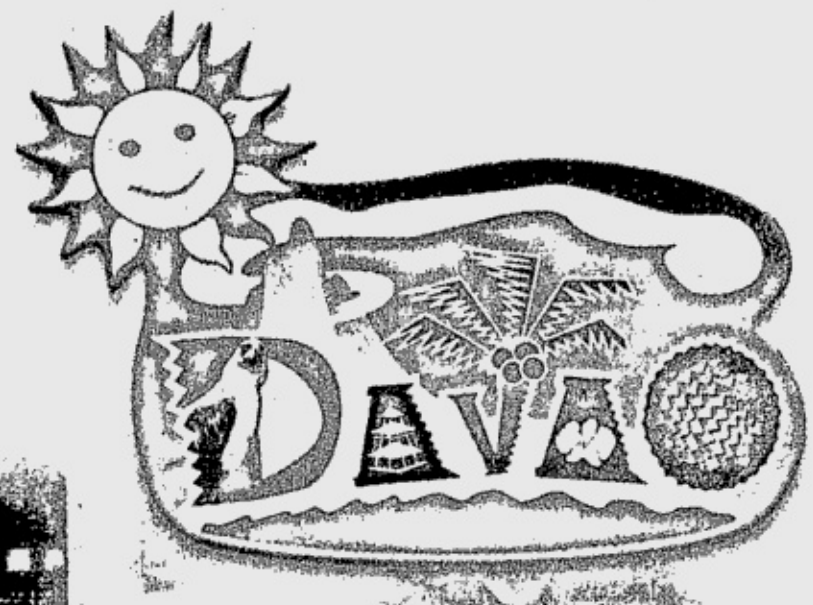
MAIN STORIES
- PETPlans Holds its 11th National Sales Convention in Davao
- PETPlans To Infuse P50M Fresh Capital

PET PLANS

INSIDE
- Lorenzo M. Tañada Awards
- ISO "Bilis Bayad"
- Opening of PETPlans-Western Union in Davao
- Overseas Expansion
- Full SEC Compliance

SPECIAL SECTION APRIL 2005

PETPlans' 11th National Sales Convention in Davao – A Success



Davao City, home of the Philippines' highest peak, also happened to be the city of the most celebrated event of PETPlans – the 11th National Sales Convention. Hundreds of qualifiers and delegates nestled comfortably in the five-star Marco Polo Davao Hotel, to be recognized for their outstanding accomplishments. No other place could have been more fitting for this auspicious celebration.

The three-day convention began with a trip around Davao's famed leisure parks – Orchid Farm and Malagos Eagle Park. After which, they took a tour of one of Davao's world-class beaches – the Pearl Farm Beach Resort. A well deserved royal treat for PETPlans' Business Partners.

In the evening, delegates gathered in fellowship over dinner, the comic antics of Rubi Rubi, the music of IV Play Band, the magic of Erik Manna, and an exciting raffle that gave away handsome cash prizes.

Traditionally, every PETPlans National Convention's pinnacle is the Lorenzo M. Tañada Award, the much-coveted award for individuals with extraordinary passion in sales performance. The award symbolizes the strength of character, devotion and passion of the late founding Chairman of PETPlans.

Not only did these exemplary individuals get to enjoy the various affairs, they also shared their experiences, lessons, and challenges from the past. This synergy of strengths and knowledge makes PETPlans' sales force more formidable each passing year.

The PETPlans' Sales Convention hails its top performers for their commitment to their planholders by providing excellent service beyond expectations. Beyond just winners, they, too, are advocates in providing a better future for their planholders. From education, to pension, and to life plans, each product is tailored to answer a planholder's need for the future. It's a promise that PETPlans and its Business Partners always keep year after year. □

THE SARIMANOK, the symbol of PETPlans' Business Partners' pledge to soar to greater heights of achievement.

PETPlans to Infuse ₱50M Fresh Capital

In a show of confidence over the continuous growth and good corporate governance of the Company, the PETPlans Board is set to increase capitalization by P50 million in excess of the P100 million required capital. This infusion will result to a total Net Paid-up Capital of P150 million.

The expansion demonstrates the Company's aggressive stance in pursuing good business opportunities that the times present. The infusion is set to gain for the Company a stronger foothold in the market, and further its aggressive marketing efforts to gain a higher market share.

Lorenzo M. Tañada Awar

The most prestigious award given to exemplary sales performers

From left: Regional Business Operations Head Adelfa T. Banal; Business District Manager Corazon L. Tamayo; Regional Business Operations Head Felino F. Briones; Business Group Manager Eugenia A. Castillote; Business Consultant Gil B. Castillote; Business Group Manager Melissa Ann T. Pranza; Business Consultant Ian J. Daguman; Business District Manager Cecilia J. Daguman; Regional Business Operations Head Estrella C. Monarca. Not in photo: Business Group Manager Rey Vincent A. Casal; Business District Manager Joan Rachelle A. Casal; Business Consultant Cydna B. Fortich

REGIONAL BUSINESS OPERATIONS HEAD

- **Felino F. Briones**
  Top RBOH (Mindanao)
- **Estrella C. Monarca**
  2nd Runner-Up (Mindanao)
- **Adelfa T. Banal**
  3rd Runner-Up (Luzon)

BUSINESS DISTRICT MANAGER

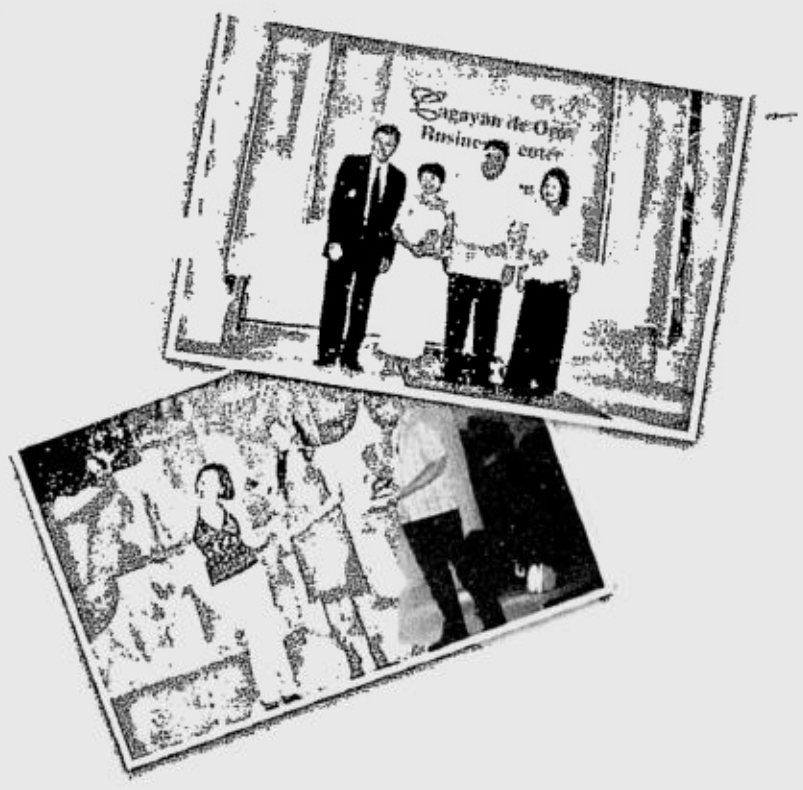
- **Corazon L. Tamayo**
  Top BDM (Luzon)
- **Cecilia J. Daguman**
  2nd Runner-Up (Visayas)
- **Joan Rachelle A. Casal**
  3rd Runner-Up (Mindanao)

BUSINESS GROUP MANAGER

- **Melissa Ann T. Pranza**
  Top BGM (Mindanao)
- **Rey Vincent A. Casal**
  2nd Runner-Up (Mindanao)
- **Eugenia A. Castillote**
  3rd Runner-Up (Visayas)

BUSINESS CONSULTANT

- **Gil B. Castillote**
  Top BC (Visayas)
- **Ian J. Daguman**
  2nd Runner-Up (Visayas)
- **Cydna B. Fortich**
  3rd Runner-Up (Mindanao)



RUNNERS-UP

Andrew Lew Franc L. Cabigas
Business Consultant (Mindanao)
4th Runner-Up

Albert J. Chu
Business Consultant (Luzon)
5th Runner-Up

Scarlet Lace Y. Almirante
Business Consultant (Mindanao)
6th Runner-Up

Judith T. Morales
Business Consultant (Visayas)
7th Runner-Up

Michael R. Co
Business Consultant (Luzon)
8th Runner-Up

Noel C. Perez
Business Consultant (Luzon)
9th Runner-Up

John Kirby A. Casal
Business Consultant (Mindanao)
10th Runner-Up

SPECIAL AWARDS

- **Pagadian**
  Most Number of Delegates by a Business Center

  Highest ICBI by a Business Center
- **Reynaldo C. Casal**
  Most Number of Plans Sold by an RBOH
- **Cagayan de Oro**
  Most Number of Plans Sold by a Business Center
- **Nelson A. Gustilo**
  Most Number of Recruits by an RBOH
- **Rachel M. Itok**
  Most Number of Recruits by a BDM
- **Noel DC. Sanares**
  Most Number of Recruits by a BGM
- **Ormoc**
  Most Number of Plans Sold by a Service Center

  Highest ICBI by a Service Center
- **Cebu**
  Highest SCBI by a Business Center
- **Veronica A. Casal**
  Highest ICBI by a TBOH
- **Andrew Lew Franc L. Cabigas**
  Highest ICBI by a Business Partner (Group Accounts)
- **Estrella C. Monarca and Felino F. Briones**
  Most Number of Delegates by an RBOH

MILLIONAIRE'S CLUB AWARDEES

- **Felino F. Briones**
  Regional Business Operations Head
- **Estrella C. Monarca**
  Regional Business Operations Head

BUSINESS DISTRICT MANAGER (BDM) EXCELLENCE AWARDEES

- **Sandi A. Pranza - Mindanao**
- **Randy M. Lopez - Mindanao**
- **Cecilia J. Daguman- Visayas**

RAFFLE DRAW WINNERS

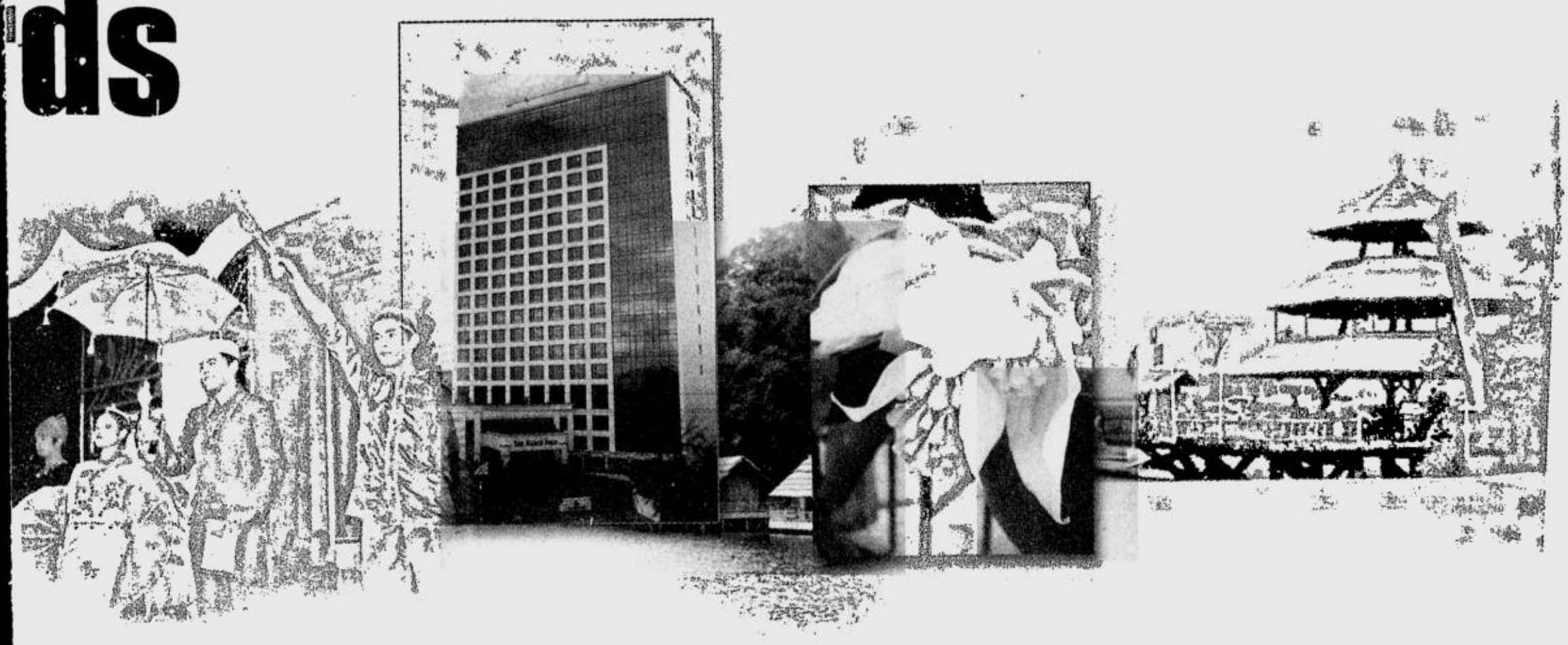
Winners of Multicabs

- **Eduardo Fernandez**
  (Business Consultant)
- **Barsilisa Patrimonio**
  (Business Consultant)
- **Rebecca Velasco**
  (Business Consultant)

Winners of Scooters

- **Corazon Tamayo**
  (Business District Manager)
- **Rosalita Montemayor**
  (Business Consultant)
- **Aimee Grace Luza**
  (Business Consultant)

The Securities and Exchange Commission has not determined the accuracy or completeness of this advertisement.



ISO Certification means "Bilis Bayad" to you

PETPlans is the only pre-need company comprehensively and consistently certified for ISO 9001:2000 for three years running. In bolstering its drive to strengthen itself as a globally competitive company it is today, PETPlans has enhanced its 31 core business processes. These were subject to the stringent scrutiny of the ISO and earned the passing mark with flying colors. This places PETPlans at par with world class standards, particularly in the area of customer focus.

Proof of which is PETPlans' "Bilis Bayad" Program. In the Head Office, for instance, in just 15 minutes, planholders get virtually hassle-free payment for their claims because of PETPlans' fast and efficient service carried out by professionally trained staff who respond quickly to every customer need. Soon, this speed in service can be enjoyed in all PETPlans outlets.

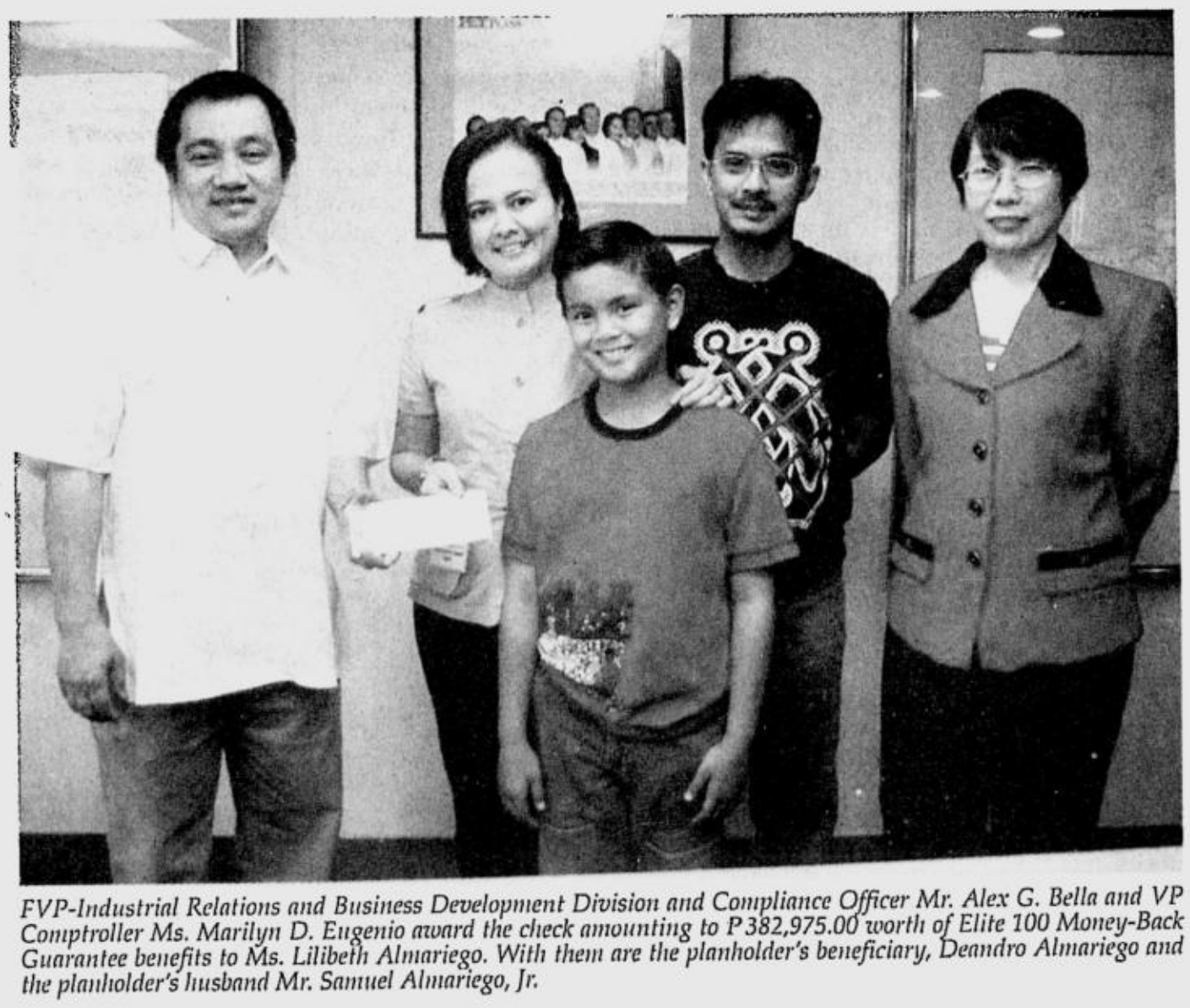
ISO 9001: 2000

CERTIFICATION INTERNATIONAL
ISO 9001: 2000
Cert. No: CI/4026

UKAS QUALITY MANAGEMENT
063

Says Larry T. Ocampo, President and COO of PETPlans,
"PETPlans is committed to maintaining world-class standards in serving our customers. The ISO 9001:2000 certification is a clear manifestation of this commitment."

Bilis Bayad ₱382,975.00 Elite 100 Education Plan Claimant



FVP-Industrial Relations and Business Development Division and Compliance Officer Mr. Alex G. Bella and VP Comptroller Ms. Marilyn D. Eugenio award the check amounting to P 382,975.00 worth of Elite 100 Money-Back Guarantee benefits to Ms. Lilibeth Almariego. With them are the planholder's beneficiary, Deandro Almariego and the planholder's husband Mr. Samuel Almariego, Jr.

Any representation to the contrary constitutes a violation of the Securities Regulation Code and is criminally punishable.

PETPlans Expands Western Union in Davao

PETPlans continues with its expansion drive with the recent opening of its PETNET outlet in Davao City last March 21, 2005. PETPlans is the mother company of PETNET, the Western Union agent that has the largest network with 2,800 locations in the Philippines. Western Union is the largest money transfer company in the world.

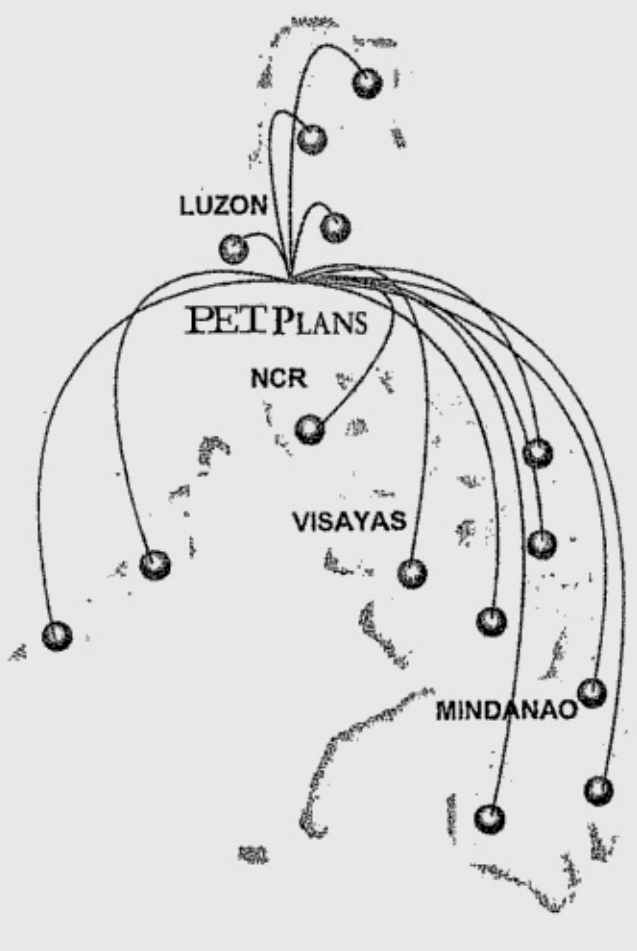
The recent expansion of its offices in the city is deemed a major initiative, Davao being a major center of trade, commerce and services in Southern Philippines.

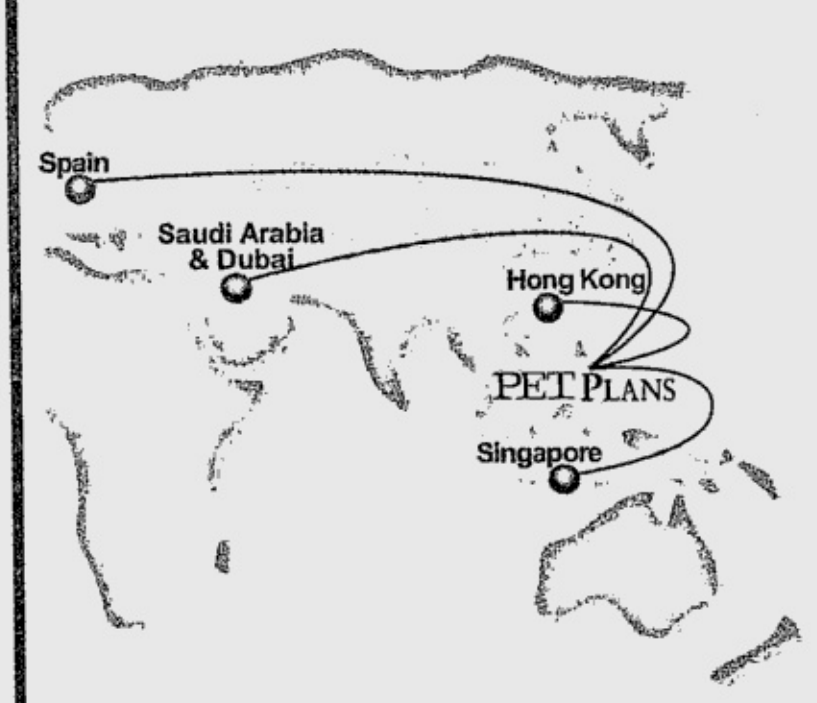
The new Davao business center boasts of customer-friendly service in the most comfortable environment. Modern technology allows greater and faster handling of transactions. An internet connection links local transactions with all parts of the world in real-time to make remittance services easier and less time-consuming.

The expansion of the PETPlans-Western Union alliance is a precursor of many forthcoming projects; a testament of PETPlans' thrust to provide quality service to its customers, its plan holders and their families.

Growing nationwide, worldwide

PETPlans is adding new and dynamic sales and marketing forces to complement existing channels. Multi-level marketing, telemarketing, and brokers all form part of PETPlans' efforts to promote growth in untapped sectors. New sales operations are set to be established in Singapore, Dubai, and Saudi Arabia, in addition to the existing branch in Hongkong and Spain, and over 100 Business Centers in the Philippines. This greatly increases PETPlans' capacity to service even more Filipinos, especially Overseas Filipino Workers.





PET PLANS INNOVATIONS

- The FIRST to offer a Dollar Pension Plan in the country
- The FIRST to introduce the Money-Back Guarantee in education plans
- The FIRST to include hospitalization benefits in all its pre-need plans
- The FIRST pre-need company accredited by the DEPEd to sell to teachers

PETPlans maintains full compliance with SEC regulations

As part of PETPlans' commitment to provide its planholders security and give them peace of mind, the Company maintains its full compliance with SEC regulations.

With the value of prudence in managing its funds, PETPlans invests only in highly liquid and diversified portfolios to make sure that its funds are kept flowing and available. This allows PETPlans to constantly meet its obligations to its planholders'. In a greater perspective, the Company is able to hedge risks from interest rates and currency exchange fluctuation.

By putting in more than the required trust fund contributions mandated by the SEC, PETPlans can maintain the capability to pay off benefit claims anytime, more so the anticipated P156 million availments expected this year. In fact, PETPlans is one of the few companies that advances tuition benefits and has done so for many years now.

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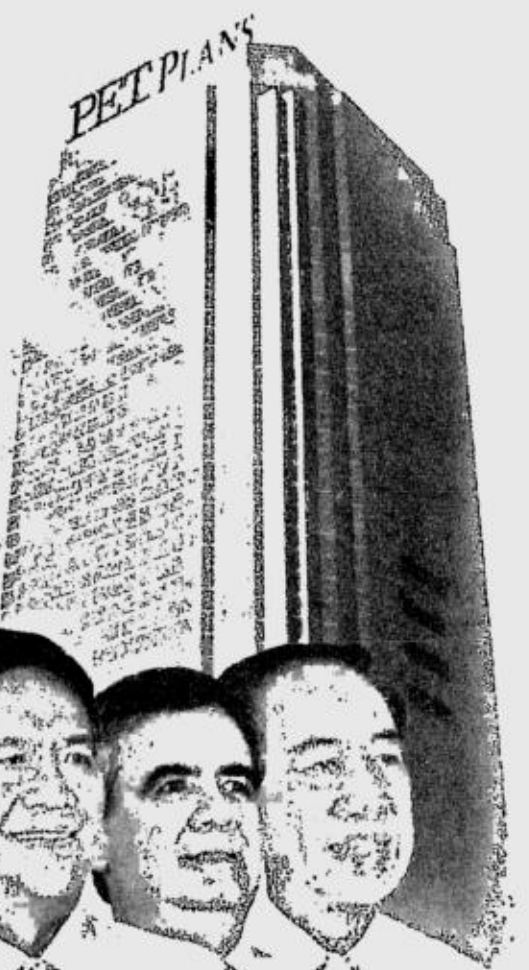

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Proponents of Values, Integrity and Performance

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■ Lifestyle / D1
Margarita Fores shares secrets for winning battle with bulge

■ Metro / A23
Dennis Roldan's girlfriend Suzette Wang also charged with kidnapping

■ Business / B1
Plan holders file class suit vs CAP, demand return of their money

■ News / A2
Yuchengcos studying Pacific Plan bailout

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APRIL 28-30, 2005 MEGATRADE HALL 1, SM MEGAMALL

Why is Mike A. always linked to corruption?

By Christine Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

A LAWMAKER wonders why First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo is constantly being linked to scandals, the latest of which is his alleged involvement in "jueteng."

WHY/ A8

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, April 28, 2005 ★★ 58 pages / 5 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 139 P18

website: www.inq7.net

Supreme Court orders BIR to pay informant P44M more

By Armand N. Nocum

A SUPREME COURT decision issued on Tuesday is certain to boost the efforts of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to motivate people to squeal on big-time tax evaders.

A BIR tipster stands to receive a whopping P44 million on top of the P14 million

SUPREME/ A8

Yorac quits PCGG post

'Fed up with Palace pressure on SMC case'

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HAYDEE Yorac, who spent her four years as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government hunting for the wealth stashed by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and prying ill-gotten assets away from his cronies, is leaving her post at the end of the month.

President Macapagal-Arroyo received Yorac's resignation letter and accepted it because the PCGG chair "requested that she be allowed to return to private practice," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday announced to reporters at a briefing in Malacañang.

"Yorac has done her job very, very well," Ermita said. The President has to consider the personal desire of the individual when someone writes a letter, and she (Yorac) wanted to go back to private life."

Reporters were not furnished a copy of the resignation letter that, according to Ermita, Yorac wrote on April 21 and that Malacañang received three days later.

Analysts have speculated that Yorac's resignation might have been spurred by disagreements with fellow PCGG nominees in the board of San Miguel Corp. who approved of SMC's recent stock rights offering. *(See related story at right.)*

The stock rights issue, which raised an ad-

YORAC/ A8

She opposes Danding's control of San Miguel

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Alcuin Papa

HER POOR health may have something to do with it but Haydee Yorac's close associates claim that the feisty lawyer got fed up with having her policies undermined by Malacañang.

The associates, who asked not to be named, said Yorac was getting frustrated that San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco had firmed up control of SMC over the last four years

SHE OPPOSES/ A8

PDI PHOTO

HAYDEE YORAC was overruled by Malacañang on key issues affecting Danding Cojuangco's control of San Miguel Corp., according to sources familiar with the matter. She was a Ramon Magsaysay awardee last year for recovering $684M from Marcos Swiss deposits.

EDWIN BACASMAS

A WALK IN THE PARK. Or so it seems for visiting Chinese President Hu Jintao, his wife Liu Yongqing as their host President Arroyo welcomes and leads them through a ceremonial walk through the Malacañang Palace grounds on Wednesday. Hu, who arrived Tuesday night, is here on a three-day state visit.

Ex-AFP chief faces graft raps over ₱8M for pool

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ANOTHER retired general has been weighed and found wanting.

Dionisio Santiago, who was Armed Forces chief of staff from Nov. 28, 2002, to April 3, 2003, has been found liable for graft for allegedly pocketing P8 million intended for the renovation of a swimming pool in Camp Aguinaldo.

A report of a recently concluded military investigation said Santiago "defrauded the government" when he deposited the P8-million check into his personal account after his retirement.

He returned the P8 million last February, supposedly after getting wind of the investigation. But the AFP Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability (OESPA) said he was still liable for graft and recommended that a complaint be lodged against him at the Office of the Ombudsman.

Col. Tertulian Duran, OESPA deputy chief, submitted the recommendation last March 21. But AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu has yet to act on it.

Santiago is a 1970 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

Shortly after retiring, he was appointed director of the Bureau of Corrections. He was recently

EX-AFP/ A10

33% of Filipinos don't have enough food–poll

ABOUT a third of the Philippine population say they are not getting enough food, according to an independent national survey released yesterday.

The March 3-16 survey of 1,200 people by Manila-based Pulse Asia found that 33 percent of the population said "their food is inadequate." The survey has a margin of error of three percentage points.

However, the nationwide figure was still an improvement over a similar survey in October 2004 where 43 percent of respondents said they were not getting enough food, a Pulse Asia statement said.

Pulse Asia did not say why the level of hunger had fallen but suggested that increased rice production, particularly in the Visayas, may have helped.

The survey also found that 29 percent of Filipinos said that "having enough to eat every day (was) an urgent personal concern" to them. This compares to 37 percent in the October 2004 survey, Pulse Asia said.

The March 2005 poll also found that about 25 percent of Filipinos said their housing was inadequate for their needs, the same percent-

33%/ A10

China, RP sign investments worth $1.6B

By Christine O. Avendaño, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Abigail L. Ho

STRENGTHENING ties with the Philippines, Chinese President Hu Jintao yesterday endorsed investments and loans worth $1.6 billion to fund infrastructure and mining projects in the country.

Hu and Ms Arroyo witnessed the signing of 14 investment agreements worth a total $1.1 billion, the biggest a $950-million investment by Baosteel group and Jinchuan Nonferrous Metals Corp. to rehabilitate the Nonoc nickel plant in Surigao City.

During last night's elegant state banquet held in Malacañang in honor of Hu, Ms Arroyo said she expects trade between the two countries to grow from $13 billion last year to over $30 billion in the next five years.

"Since China became a market economy, the economic relations between our two countries have grown in trade, industry, development assistance and tourism at a point where we are beginning a golden age in our relationship," Ms Arroyo said.

Trade between the Philippines and China has been growing at a red-hot pace of 55 percent over the last three years hitting $13.328 billion in 2004 with the Philippines enjoying a surplus of $4.79 billion.

Ms Arroyo cited several Philippine companies doing good in China—Figaro Coffee, Bench Apparel, SM, Liwayway Food Corp., Asia Brewery and San Miguel Corp.

Present during the gold-themed banquet were former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel V. Ramos and the country's leading businessmen led by taipans Lucio Tan and John Gokongwei.

China also agreed to provide

CHINA/ A10

OFWs cash cow for RP economy, says World Bank

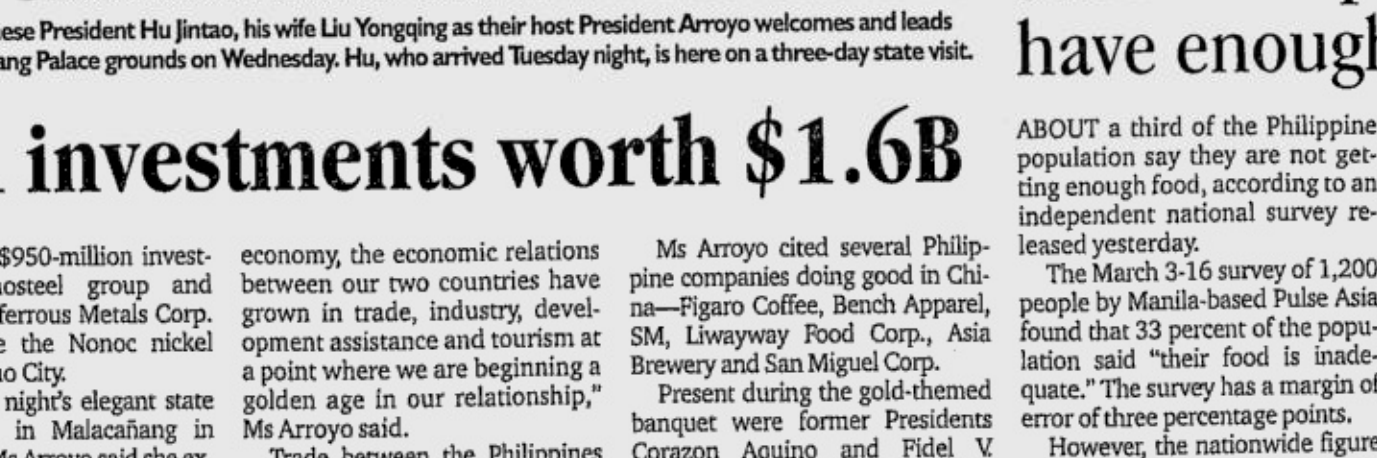
WASHINGTON—Double-digit growth in overseas worker remittances has set the Philippine economy on a rising path in recent years, but high oil prices and weak agricultural production may darken prospects somewhat in 2005, the World Bank said yesterday.

Total OFW remittances in 2004 hit a record $8.5 billion, up 11.3 percent from 2003.

The World Bank said the Philippines has benefited in past years from a surge in migrant worker remittances, rapid growth in exports to China and strong sales of semiconductor electronics, which make up more than two-thirds of the country's exports.

But while the economy grew 6.1 percent in 2004—its fastest rate in 15 years—the World Bank said the pace of growth likely edged lower in early 2005 as high oil prices cut into consumer

OFWs/ A18



THE ANGUISHED ABALOS FAMILY

Patriarch, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, is in tears at the funeral service for his favorite granddaughter Ciara at San Felipe Church in Mandaluyong City on Wednesday. (Above right) Charisse, twin sister of Ciara, their mother Menchie and father, Rep. Benhur Abalos. Ciara, 19, succumbed to the E. coli bacteria last Friday. RUDY ESPERAS

'My feelings went from grief to anger'

By Tarra V. Quismundo

HER FACE was etched with pain and her voice trembled as she recalled to sobbing listeners the life of the sister she had lived with for most of her life.

"I was very privileged to have had a wonderful sister. She was very kind-hearted," said Leticia in a five-minute eulogy to her older sister, Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos, who was brutally killed in a break-in at their house in Palanan, Makati, early last Sunday.

"She was a lovely person inside and out. I was so proud of her and loved her deeply," said the 61-

MY FEELINGS/ A4

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds blowing from the east to southeast will prevail throughout the archipelago.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/04/28/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Palace welcomes VAT free hand

Yuchengcos studying Pacific Plan bailout

THE YUCHENGCO family is studying how it can bail its preneed firm Pacific Plans Inc. without compromising its other businesses, according to a PPI official.

The Yuchengco Group will help PPI "in anyway it can" without breaching regulations for its other business interests, PPI president Ernesto Garcia told the ABS-CBN television.

The group is a diverse operation with interests in preneed, banking, education, insurance, property development, automotive and mutual funds.

Sources privy to the group's activities said this statement meant that funds from the group's Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. would not be used to fund a bailout of PPI and neither can its insurance affiliates Malayan Insurance and Grepalife disburse funds for such a bailout.

The sources also said that the Yuchengco Group's education arm, the Mapua Institute, was possibly studying whether to accept fixed value plans as tuition payment.

PPI has been in talks with at least one foreign financial institution to possibly set up funds to buy the converted fixed-value plans of its plan holders under its money-back program.

Claiming it had run out of cash and might not be able to pay future claims, PPI in early April asked the Makati regional trial court to allow it to suspend payments and approve a rehabilitation plan for the company.

It said it would be able to cover only P341 million worth of payments for the present enrollment period.

In its petition for rehabilitation, PPI estimated that its obligation to plan holders for the May to June 2005 enrollment period alone was roughly P350 million.

PPI has 34,000 plan holders, about 16,000 of whom are expected to file educational claims during the 2005-2006 school year.

The company is offering to return its plan holders' payments by issuing fixed-value plans which can be encashed by July 2010 when the government bonds in PPI's trust funds mature.

Under this scheme, the plan holder would swap his traditional open-ended educational plan—in which PPI has promised to pay tuition at any rate—for the fixed-value plan which can be encashed in July 2010.

"The liquidity fund we are trying to put up is another option for our plan holders for ready cash. They don't have to look around for a buyer because it will be a ready buyer," the company said in a statement.

The company said the fixed-value plans would earn upon maturity seven percent in compounded interest, excluding charges.

These plans are backed by government bonds, which are among the safest investment instruments around, PPI said.

The fixed-value plans will be issued after the Makati court approves the rehabilitation plan.

In disbursing the P341 million in tuition payments, PPI has pegged a tuition support ceiling of P22,000 per semester for those enrolled in non-exclusive schools and P28,000 for exclusive schools.

The company also said it was also hoping to start talks with interested investors, including its majority shareholders, the Yuchengco family, to infuse P300 million into PPI as part of its working capital.

The amount to be infused, should the company succeed in securing court approval for the rehabilitation in the next 16 to 18 months and attract new investors, would be over the existing assets of the company, PPI said.

" We will talk with anybody who will be serious in getting into the company including them (Yuchengcos)," PPI spokesperson Jeanette Tecson said.

Under its business plan submitted to the court, PPI said it has assets in its trust fund worth $51 million in the form of Napocor bonds.

If sold today, proceeds from the bonds will only amount to P1.91 billion, or 18 percent less than the total entitlement of P2.32 billion.

Liquidating Napocor bonds was not a viable option if it is to avoid diminishing the value of its trust fund and prevent compromising the return on the plans for its remaining shareholders, PPI said.

PPI estimates the loss in value for plan holders at P550 million if it is to liquidate its trust fund assets. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

By Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana

IN A bid to break the deadlock over the value added tax, Malacañang is amenable to a proposal to grant President Macapagal-Arroyo provisional authority to increase the VAT rate if both houses of Congress fail to reconcile their respective versions of the crucial tax bill.

"We are not discounting that proposal if in the end we will be able to achieve fiscal stability and serve the highest interest of our people," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters. "It appears to be workable, instead of having an impasse."

Bunye said members of the bicameral committee came up with the proposal Wednesday night after the bicam meeting was indefinitely suspended due to continued disagreement on whether to increase the 10-percent VAT rate.

Sen. Ralph Recto is already drafting the proposal to give the President a standby authority to raise the VAT but members of the Senate panel are also divided on it.

Administration senators Manuel Villar, Joker Arroyo and Richard Gordon and opposition solons Juan Ponce Enrile and Serge Osmeña are against the proposal to delegate the power to raise the levy to the chief executive.

Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, said giving the President the standby authority to raise VAT under certain conditions is a possible compromise to break the stalemate in the bicameral conference on VAT.

Recto has said the Senate panel will not go back to the bicam unless a compromise is arrived at.

In a news briefing, Bunye stressed that Malacañang was committed to work with the bicameral committee "in a manner that is institutionally appropriate and constructive."

That's why he said the standby authority proposal being suggested was something that the executive branch finds to be "workable."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the executive branch was not inclined to intervene to break the impasse because this involves a "legislative matter."

But House Minority Leader Francis Escudero accused Malacañang of intervening in the bicam process.

"We should now call it a tricam because of President Macapagal-Arroyo's intervention in the bicam," said Escudero who stressed that her participation should only be limited to certification, signing and veto of any measure.

Escudero also scored Recto's proposal to allow the President to raise VAT. "That call is uncalled for because it is a slap on the independence of Congress. It's a clear encroachment on the part of Congress, and I'm calling on the members of Congress to defend their powers and prerogatives."

The bicam deadlock arose after the nine-member Senate panel decided in a caucus on Tuesday to stick to 10 percent "at the moment," pitting it against the House which wants VAT raised to 12 percent.

Malacañang favors the House version.

"We will just have to wait for the final action of the bicameral conference committee," Bunye said. "You will notice that out of the senators involved in bicameral committee, I think 9 or 10—many are identified with administration."

But not all administration senators are not toeing the Palace line.

"I've always been for 10 percent. I have not changed my mind," Villar told reporters. Villar and Arroyo are the "hardliners" for 10 percent.

But Angara, a member of the minority, said the standby authority is a good compromise if realistic conditions" are put in the law.

He said one condition would be for the Bureau of Internal Revenue to increase its collection efficiency by at least 10 percent.

Senate President Franklin Drilon declined to comment on the proposed authority for the President.

Rep. Jesli Lapus, chair of the House ways and means committee, said the "deadlock" was forcing the House to take a hardline stance by retreating to its original position.

"The House panel has therefore revoked all its generous concessions and instructed me to tell the Senate that it now stands by the original version it passed (10 percent). The Senate has set us back to square one," said Lapus at a press conference .

Lapus said the House bicam panel would only go back to the negotiating table should the Senate bical panel come back "with a clear mandate" and "willingness" to negotiate. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

Garcia had money for wife's surgeries, says prosecutor

By Nelson F. Flores

SPECIAL Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio yesterday said the lawyers of retired Armed Forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia claim that his wife Clarita had undergone 13 surgical operations in the United States was further proof that the Garcia family had the capacity to spend.

Villa-Ignacio said surgical procedures in the US were quite expensive, and if the lawyers' claims were true, it only indicated that the Garcias were well-equipped to fund such medical operations.

Clarita's surgical operations, the latest of which was a brain surgery, was discussed after the counsel for the Garcias asked the Sandiganbayan not to issue a warrant of arrest against her because of mental problems.

One of Garcias' lawyers, Constantino de Jesus, had told the Sandiganbayan that Clarita suffered memory loss after the surgery, her 13th medical operation.

"Accused Clarita D. Garcia is not in good health, having undergone 13 major surgical operations, the latest, a brain surgery which caused diabetes, fading vision, and loss of memory. Flight is not possible," De Jesus said.

Villa-Ignacio, however, said unless the lawyers of the Garcias would be able to show proof of her alleged mental problem then the presumption of sanity and normalcy would apply.

"Besides there is no indication that Clarita has a mental problem. Maybe it is General Garcia who has a problem since he would not admit that she is his spouse," Villa-Ignacio said in an interview.

Garcia, Clarita and sons Ian Carl, Juan Paolo and Timothy Mark were charged with plunder for allegedly amassing unexplained wealth worth more than P303 million.

Except for Garcia, who is detained, and his wife, who is reportedly in the country, the children are reportedly in the United States.

Since plunder is a capital offense that carries the maximum penalty of death, government prosecutors did not recommend bail for any member of the Garcia family.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo had said that investigation conducted by his office showed that Garcia, in connivance with the members of his family, "willfully, unlawfully and criminally amass, accumulate and acquire ill-gotten wealth in the form of funds, landholdings and other real and personal properties in the aggregate amount of P303,272,005.99."

Villa-Ignacio explained that Garcia's wife and children were included in the complaint because most of the properties allegedly amassed by the retired general were under their names. He added that it was impossible that they were not aware of what [Garcia] was doing.

Farmers vow legal action to stop Agusan coco project

By Blanche S. Rivera

FARMERS opposed to the P8.4-billion hybrid coconut nursery in Agusan del Sur are taking their battle to court with a class suit to be filed in Quezon City next week.

PEACE Foundation and members of the Manobo tribe who hold titles to ancestral lands w ithin the 110,000-hectare Agusan property eyed as nursery site will ask the court to scrap PD 1768, which gives the Philippine Coconut Authority the right to develop the Agusan land.

PEACE Foundation president Manuel Quiambao said the petition to annul PD 1768 could be the only way to stop the P8.4-billion coco project.

If the court scraps PD 1768, the feasibility study being conducted by the Department of Agriculture and PCA would no longer be necessary or valid because the PCA would be stripped of its authority to develop the land.

Quiambao said the presidential decree issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos in 1981 was "technically flawed" because it did not come with the map stipulated as an attachment by the decree.

"That map is supposed to define the boundaries of the land that the PCA could develop. But there's no map. So that decree is technically flawed," Quiambao told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap has declared that the government would not abandon its plan to establish a coconut nursery in Agusan unless recommended by the DA's feasibility study.

"They're the same people. The impartiality of the task force doing the feasibility study is doubtful," Quiambao said.

"If they really want it to be credible, they should include independent experts, especially from UP Los Baños," he added.

Quiambao said the government should do a very thorough survey of the 174,000 hectares of land covered by PD 1768, and identify which are agricultural and forest lands.

He said that some 1,500 hectares of the Agusan land are also covered by Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles given to a Manobo tribe. Six other tribes have a pending application for CADT in the same area.

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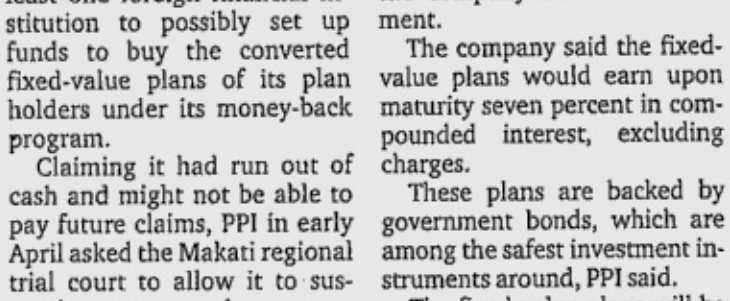
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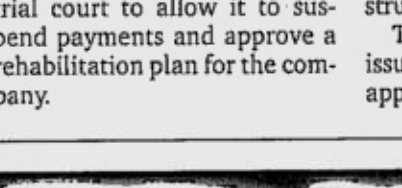
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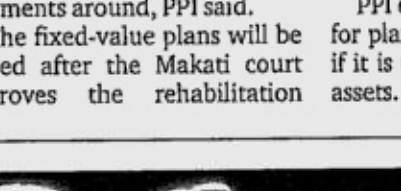
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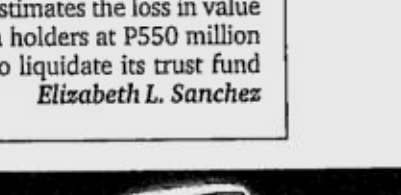
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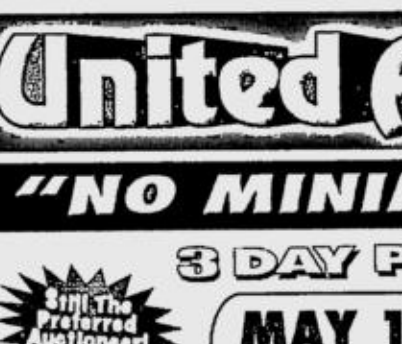
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Erap lawyer takes the stand

Prosecutor says defense running out of witnesses

By Nelson F. Flores

IS THE ESTRADA camp running out of witnesses?

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio thinks so.

Raymond Fortun, a member of the defense panel for ousted President Estrada in the plunder trial, testified yesterday as part of the defense strategy to "save the day because they do not have any witness available," according to Villa-Ignacio.

Villa-Ignacio said the appearance of Fortun at the Sandiganbayan was an indication that the defense panel was running out of witnesses.

"Even Fortun's testimony has no bearing since he is not a witness or a participant to the event he is testifying at," Villa-Ignacio said.

The defense panel, in previous hearings, had promised the anti-graft court to present at least two witnesses every session.

Fortun, the 34th defense witness, testified that he was a member of Estrada's team of lawyers and that part of his job was to verify the evidence presented against his client.

Fortun told the court that he verified the evidence, including the testimony by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson claiming that he delivered P130 million to Estrada in his Polk Street house in Greenhills, San Juan.

According to Fortun, he asked Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas how much would P130 million in P1,000 bills weigh and was told that it would be about 130 kilos or about one kilo per P1 million pesos.

As to the claim of Singson that he delivered P130 million to Estrada, Fortun said that would be improbable since that would weigh about two-and-a-half-sack of rice.

Fortun, however, admitted during cross-examination that he was not present nor did he witness the delivery of money to Estrada's house.

Villa-Ignacio later clarified in court that nobody was saying, Singson included, that the money was brought in one bulk. What was clear, he added, the P130 million was delivered to the former leader's house in Greenhills in four boxes.

Defense lawyer Jose Flaminiano, however, lashed back at Villa-Ignacio.

"Ever since he (Villa-Ignacio) kept on saying we don't have any witness but we have repeatedly proven him wrong," Flaminiano said.

Flaminiano said Fortun's testimony was correct when he said that it was impossible for Charlie "Atong" Ang, Estrada's associate, to carry P130 million all by himself as alleged by Singson in his affidavit.

Estrada is facing a multi-million-peso plunder case before the Sandiganbayan for allegedly pocketing money from "jueteng" operations when he was still in office. He marked his 4th year of detention last Monday in his rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

No objection to Erap's joining ma's 100th b-day

By Nelson F. Flores

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday said it had no objection to the motion of deposed President Joseph Estrada to attend the 100th birthday celebration of his mother, Mary Ejercito.

In a two-page comment to the Sandiganbayan, the PNP said it "interposes no objection" to Estrada's motion that he be allowed to attend the thanksgiving Mass for his mother on May 2 at the Manila Hotel. However, the national police remain adamant that there would not be any side trip for the former president.

"From his place of confinement in Tanay, he shall go directly to Manila Hotel and from there shall return directly to his place of confinement without delay or any side trip or deviation so as not to compromise his safety and security," the PNP stressed.

The PNP also reminded Estrada that he should strictly comply with the scheduled duration of the visit from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Loren laments execution of NPA captives

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER Senator Loren Legarda yesterday lamented the reported execution of Marine Sgt. Jeremias Rosete and three other civilians by the New People's Army for conducting "espionage against the people and the revolutionary forces."

Legarda led efforts to seek the release of Rosete, Herminia Sorongon, Pepito Simbulan and Wilfredo Madecir when she was still a senator. The four were seized by the NPA on Sept. 4, 2001 in Barangay Datal Blao in Koronadal.

The Mindanao Commission of the Communist Party of the Philippines said the four were meted out with maximum penalty of death on Sept. 6, 2002 by the Valentin Palamine Command of Far South Region.

The CPP said the sentence was carried out after a thorough investigation and trial by its regional trial court.

The Valentin Palamine Command reportedly led the families of the four to where their remains were buried in the isolated village of Columbio in Mindanao.

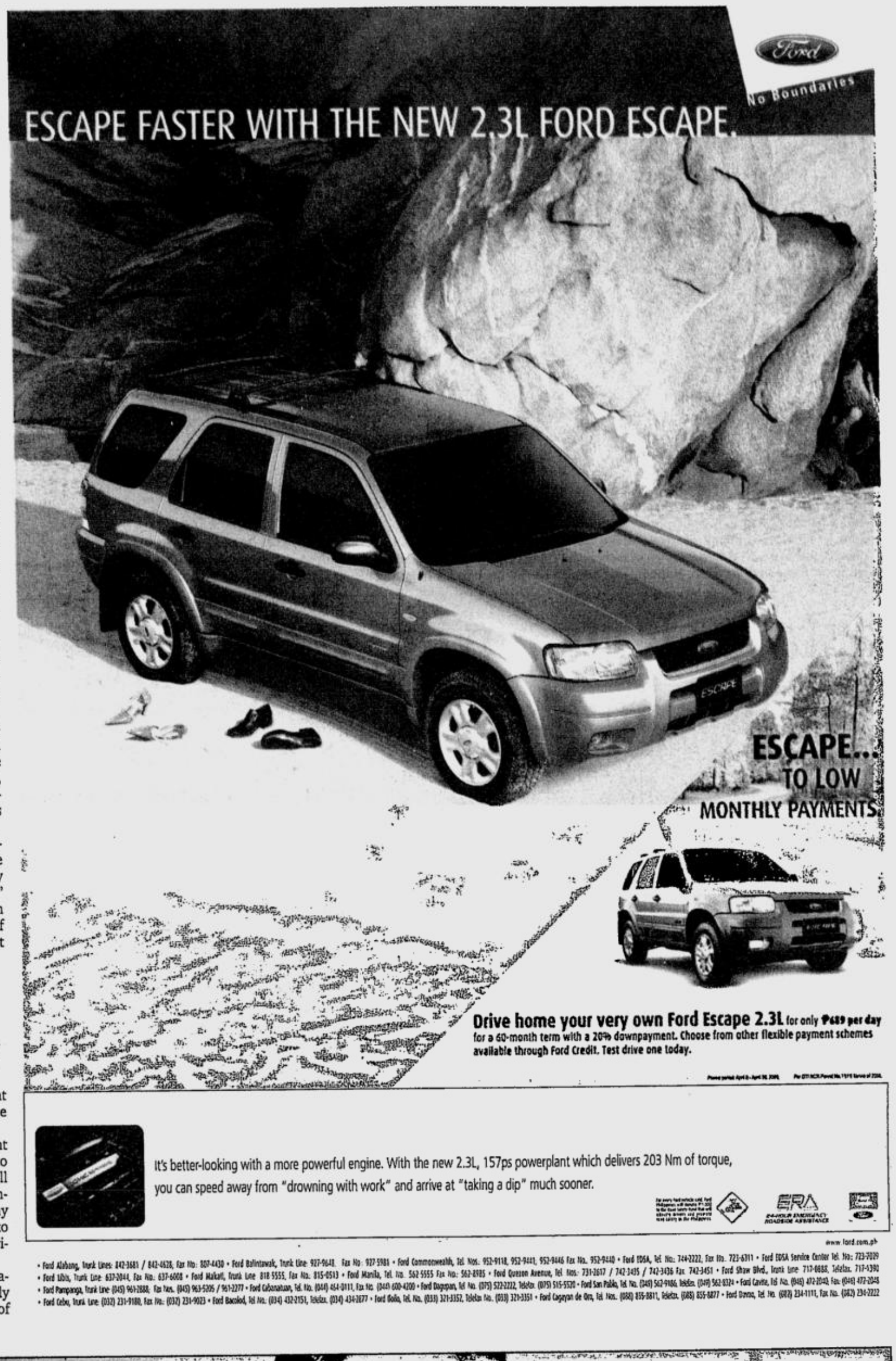
"The remains have yet to be identified but, just the same, I grieve for the victims and their families," Legarda said.

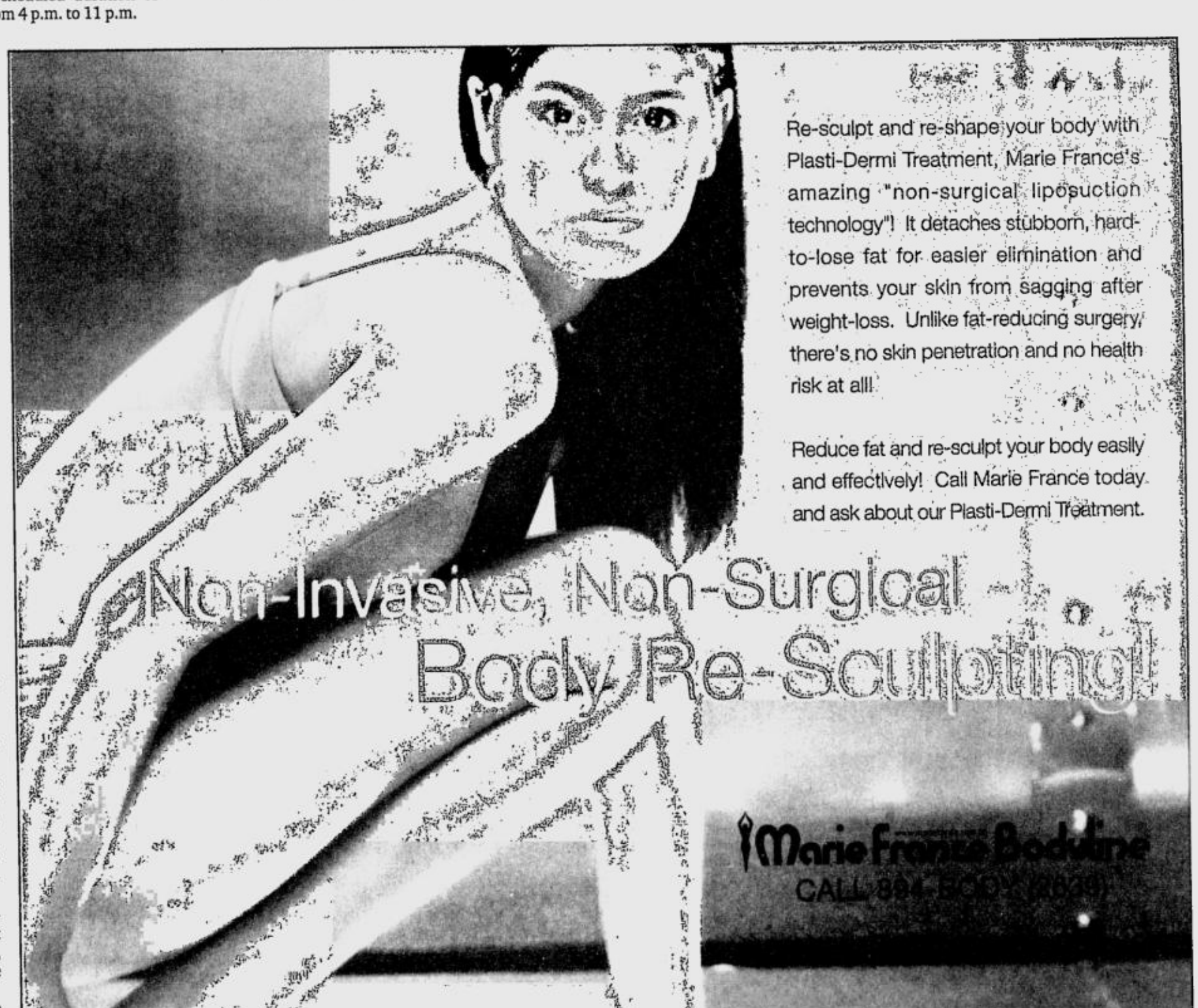
The CPP said that Rosete and his cohorts had long been active in their counter-revolutionary activities, thereby inflicting damage to the revolutionary movement.

Legarda urged the government to extend full financial support to the families of the victims.

She said there was a need to make representations with the CPP leadership to find out what has happened to the child of Sorongan, the only woman captive, who reportedly gave birth while in captivity.

In 2002, Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez of the Diocese of Marbel reported that Sorongon had given birth.





MISS SABUTAN
Juliet Chavez, Miss Sabutan Festival and the first Agta to win in a beauty contest, kisses the hand of INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot in doing a *"mano po,"* a traditional sign of respect for elders, during a call at the PDI office Tuesday. Others, from left: Executive Director Cecile Guidote-Alvarez of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, and Mayor Natividad Bernardo of Palanan, Isabela.

Albay mine holds key to promotion of RP mining industry

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE $42-MILLION mining project in Rapu-Rapu, Albay, holds the key to the success of the government's efforts in promoting the Philippines as a favorable mining investment site, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said.

Rapu-Rapu, which is being mined by the Australian firm Lafayette Polymetallics Mining Co., is the first major mining investment in the country after the passage of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

"Rapu-Rapu is the showcase of the Philippine government in the initial testing or the gauge of international investors in coming into the country," Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said in a statement.

He said that 10 more Australian firms are closely watching the developments in the Rapu-Rapu mining project to see how the Philippines handled foreign investments in the industry.

"If something goes wrong with Rapu-Rapu, this would affect the entire mining investment in the country... Rapu-Rapu can make or break the country's mining industry," Defensor said.

The project is set to go fully operational anytime between June and December.

Defensor said Lafayette has invested some $42 million in Rapu-Rapu, of which $39.12 million has been infused in the site mainly for social development requirements.

Rapu-Rapu is a fourth-class municipality in Albay that thrives mainly on farming and fishing. When it was opened to mining in 1995, there were only 1,710 households in the municipality, which covers 5,589 hectares of land.

Rapu-Rapu was found to be rich in gold, silver, copper and zinc, with an estimated mineralization value of at least $262 million five years ago.

Lafayette Polymetallics Mining Co. has secured almost all the requirements for commercial operations, including the Partial Declaration of Mining Project Feasibility Report, Environmental Compliance Certificate, Environmental Protection and Enhancement Program, a three-year work program, and approval of Sanggunian and survey plan.

The firm needs only to obtain a mineral processing permit for the Rapu-Rapu Processing Inc. Its application has been forwarded for approval to Defensor as of Feb. 15, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

Palace starts paying AFP pension arrears

By Gil Cabacungan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has approved the release of P300 million in June to partially pay the government's arrears owed to over 100,000 military retirees and veterans.

Although just a drop in the bucket of the government's total liabilities of P17 billion, Malacañang officials are optimistic this would be enough to appease the pensioners and veterans who have grown increasingly restive over the past few months after their demands for immediate liquidation of their unpaid pension and other benefits have fallen on deaf ears.

In a briefing, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said: "The bulk of arrears will be paid. We are doing this not as a matter of law but as a matter of justice, we are paying for defending the Philippines."

Cruz was cheered on by more than 20 veterans who sat through his press conference in Malacañang.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, who is also a retired military officer, said the government realized that "veterans were not getting any younger" and that his fellow veterans were just "looking for our immediate needs."

Cruz said the government, which has not allocated for the payment of the unpaid pension and benefits in the 2005 budget, was able to secure the funds from the savings realized from the austerity measures and increments in tax collection this year.

"I think retirees have to support the new tax measures being pushed by the government in Congress and the tax collection efforts of the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenues because (the more) our fiscal position improves, the more we can pay our dues to them," Cruz said.

Based on the President's order, P159.062 million will be released to the Armed Force of the Philippines to pay the increase in the pension and gratuities for 93,601 AFP retirees for the period October to December 2002.

The succeeding pension differentials will be paid in the coming years—unpaid pension for January 2003 will be paid on June 2006 and unpaid dues on February 2003 will be liquidated in June 2007.

US respects RP recall of OFWs

THE UNITED States Embassy in Manila yesterday underscored the "important" and "crucial" role being played by overseas Filipino workers in American-led efforts to pacify and rebuild war-torn Iraq.

A US diplomat accorded praises to OFWs when asked to confirm an earlier statement from Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo that Washington had expressed concern over Manila's move to bring home OFWs in Iraq after fresh violence killed two Filipinos early this month.

"Filipino workers play an important role in the Allied effort to bring peace and democracy to a people who have been too long deprived of both," said embassy spokesperson Karen Kelley.

"Those Filipinos, who are industrious and brave, are crucial to our united efforts," she said of the biggest foreign labor force—mostly cooks and drivers—now working in US-run military installations in Iraq.

But Kelley said, "we recognize the Philippines' concern for the welfare of its citizens."

"This is understandable and we respect that position," she said, referring to the government's recent offer to fly home all its estimated 6,000 workers in Iraq.

No-frills flight lands

SINGAPORE-BASED budget airline Jetstar Asia started its daily operations to Manila yesterday with the arrival of Flight 3K561 from the city-state at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, as Filipinos are starting to get acquainted with affordable, no frills international air travel.

The airline's brand new Airbus A320 jet piloted by Capt. Peter Boughen landed at 11:15 a.m. at the Naia.

The Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) prepared a festive welcome for the inaugural flight's 125 passengers, complete with sampaguita leis for each one of them and a *rondalla* band that filled the concourse with local songs.

Transportation Undersecretary Oscar Palabyab, Miaa general manager Alfonso Cusi, and Jetstar staff and officials led by chief executive officer Ken Ryan were present to welcome the passengers to Manila.

At a press conference held at the Naia's Dignitaries' Lounge, Ryan thanked the Philippine government for giving the airline company the remaining traffic rights available between Manila and Singapore via the country's premier airport.

"The (landing) rights into Manila is quite restricted and we are thankful that we were granted what was possible," Ryan said.

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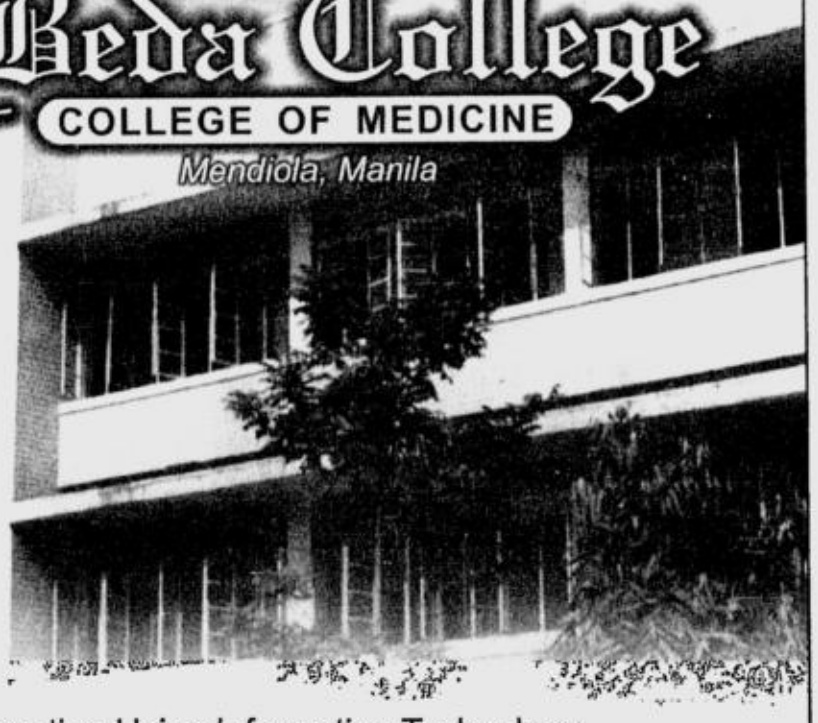

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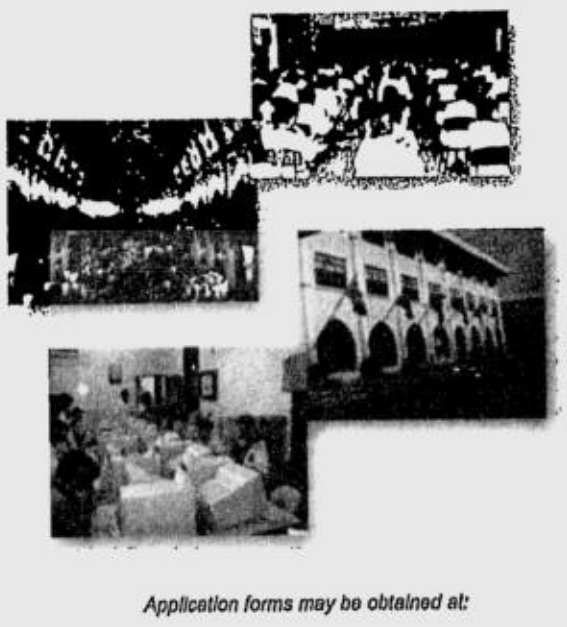

Application forms may be obtained at:

Office of the Dean, College of Medicine
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Cellular: 0927-8193936
Email: sanbedacolmed@yahoo.com
Deadline: April 29, 2005

" That in all things God may be glorified."

'My feelings went from grief to anger'

From page A1

year-old Leticia, who survived the attack with only minor injuries.

Still visibly weak, Leticia spoke haltingly and almost inaudibly at the necrological services for the 64-year-old Alicia, a career diplomat who last served as assistant secretary for Asia-Pacific affairs.

"I last saw her alive on Saturday night while watching [television]. She was supposed to be on her way to Mass on Sunday, but she was never able to go," said Leticia, also a foreign affairs officer.

"I was almost crushed when the police told me that she was dead. My feelings went from grief to anger," she said.

Police yesterday said that Leticia had given an initial statement to the police, recalling what happened between 5.30 a.m. and 7.30 a.m. at the Ramos sisters' residence at 5552 Boyle St. in Palanan.

Formalizing statement

"She just formalized what she had told the responding policemen on the day of the incident," said Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, the Southern Police District director.

He said a female investigator interviewed Leticia for a few minutes at the wake for Alicia on Tuesday morning.

In her sworn statement, which was not released to the media, Leticia recounted what has been reported in countless newspaper, television and radio reports.

"She confirmed that when she opened the door, she was surprised that two men grabbed her, gagged her, then tied her up. She then saw two other men go upstairs to her sister's room," said Garcia in a phone interview.

She also recalled seeing a getaway car and driver waiting outside the house and another man who served as lookout.

This increased to six the number of suspects being sought by police, said Garcia.

During the two hours that the crime happened, Leticia escaped and managed to run down the street to St. Clare's Hospital, asked to use the telephone and report the incident to a nearby police station.

When Leticia returned to the house with policemen, the burglars were gone and they found Alicia lying dead inside her second-floor bedroom.

Garcia said Leticia's description of the burglars was "still very vague."

"She could not describe the facial features, but she said they were around 5'4", had dark skin, and in her own words, 'well-exercised'," he said.

He said Leticia has yet to give any information on what valuables were taken from the sisters' six-bedroom, book-filled house.

"We still do not have the amount [of what was stolen]. She has yet to do an inventory of the valuables inside the house," said Garcia.

He said there were still many questions to answer and Leticia may be asked to give a supplementary statement later.

A crowd of about 100, including relatives, members of the diplomatic corps, and officials and employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs attended the service at the Guadalupe Memorial Chapels.

Retirement plans

"I've had the pleasure of being her friend, and we enjoyed our youth together. When she retired she was to paint again, learn how to swim, travel, take piano lessons ... And we were going back to China, for which Alice and I had a certain fondness," said DFA undersecretary Sonia Brady.

The murdered diplomat was due to retire next year.

If Alicia had still been around, the three-day state visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao would have been given her distinctive professional and authoritative touch, said Brady, adding that it was Alicia who had done most of the planning for the visit.

"In the bilaterals today, the fingerprints of Alice were everywhere. She was there during the preparations, and she was there up to the end," said Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Romulo said Alicia's death was an unfortunate loss not only for the government but also for the country.

"Why did Alice, so gentle and so kind, meet such a brutal and senseless death? Maybe people like her are like meteors in the heavens, who shine and then consume themselves that they may enlighten the darkness in this world," he said.

Former Sen. Leticia-Ramos Shahani, herself a former top DFA and United Nations official, said Alicia was her special assistant when she served as foreign undersecretary.

Alicia will be making her final journey to her hometown in Rosario, Cavite today, where she will be buried beside her parents at the Seventh Fleet Cemetery, said a DFA officer who organized the wake and funeral.

The funeral convoy will leave for Cavite after the 8 a.m. Mass today.

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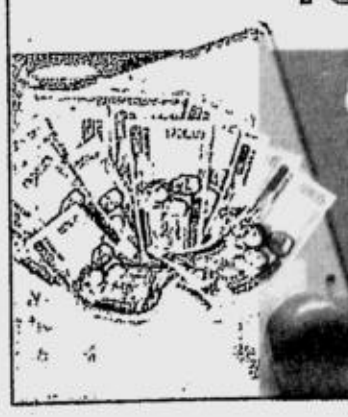

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0002 Series of 2005

Capalla not seeking 2nd CBCP term

By Christian V. Esguerra

THERE'S a silent storm raging among Filipino Catholic bishops.

Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, is under fire for his alleged weak leadership and perceived closeness to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

A fellow bishop aired this complaint "in so many words" in a privilege address he delivered during the CBCP's plenary last January, according to a highly reliable source privy to the incident.

"In so many words, he was complaining about Archbishop Capalla's allegedly weak leadership and closeness to the President," the source told the INQUIRER yesterday without naming the bishop.

Two weeks ago, the soft-spoken Capalla individually wrote his fellow bishops, informing them that he would no longer seek the chairmanship of the CBCP's permanent council, the source said.

"He felt the heat," he claimed, referring to the January incident. "It's tantamount to saying that he would no longer seek a second term as CBCP president."

Sought for comment, Capalla said in a text message: "Please tell the truth with the request not to read any meaning to my letter to the bishops."

The permanent council governs the CBCP whenever it is not in plenary. It is composed of the CBCP president, vice president and duly elected representatives for Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iniguez on Tuesday confirmed that Capalla had indeed sent fellow bishops a "manifesto" containing his "irrevocable" decision not to seek a second term.

"He said he wanted to concentrate on his archdiocese," he told reporters. "*Napapabayaan na raw nya* (He said he was neglecting it already)."

But the source said Capalla's decision was most likely a result of lingering complaints about his leadership.

"Many believe that his leadership is weak," he said. "*Watak-watak mga* bishops *ngayon* (There's no unity among bishops today)."

The source cited instances where bishops would speak—and sometimes express contrasting opinions—on pressing issues while their president Capalla would often remain silent.

On top of this is Capalla's supposed affiliation with the President, owing to her deep support for his Bishops-Ulama Conference in Mindanao. The group is the prime backer of coconut farmers struggling to benefit from the coco levy funds.

Capalla probably felt indebted to the President because of the hefty amount she had infused in the effort, the source said.

"In fairness to the archbishop," he said, "he never touched a single centavo of the fund."

Still, too much closeness with a politician is seen as an affront to the separation of Church and state principle. Among the clergy, sleeping with the political authority is taboo.

When Ms Arroyo flew to the Vatican to attend the funeral rites for Pope John Paul II, Capalla was among the handful of bishops she had handpicked to join her chartered flight.

In making his decision, Capalla would break the tradition of CBCP presidents serving two terms. Each president is eligible to serve two consecutive two-year terms, after which they would no longer be allowed to run.

Election for a second term is largely a formality because incumbent presidents usually get a fresh mandate, provided there is no pressing reason for peers to boot them out.

Capalla, who became CBCP president in January 2004, is set to complete his first term on Dec. 31. Election for a second term is set during the CBCP's plenary at the Pope Pius XII Catholic Center, Manila this July.

4 big airlines sign up for Naia 3 space

By Nikko Dizon

FOUR major airlines have recently signed a separate space allocation agreement with the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) that would guarantee them office space at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3.

Miaa general manager Alfonso Cusi said China Airlines, Northwest Airlines, EVA Air, and Korean Airlines could start designing and constructing their office spaces at the new terminal that the government said would open on June 21.

"We have already taken possession of Naia 3," Cusi said in explaining why the airlines would be allowed to enter the terminal despite a court order saying that while the airport facility has been expropriated, government could still not exercise ownership of the property until legal issues have been settled.

Cusi admitted that construction inside the airport would be an act tantamount to exercising ownership.

He said it is still the subject of debate.

Cusi said there would be a policy meeting today at Malacañang to discuss all issues involving Naia 3.

"The point here really is (our country) needs this terminal," Cusi said.

At the press conference yesterday of budget airline Jetstar Asia, Cusi said that there was a possibility that the opening of Naia 3 would be delayed.

He declined to elaborate, saying he would inform the media of the latest developments after the policy meeting at the Palace.

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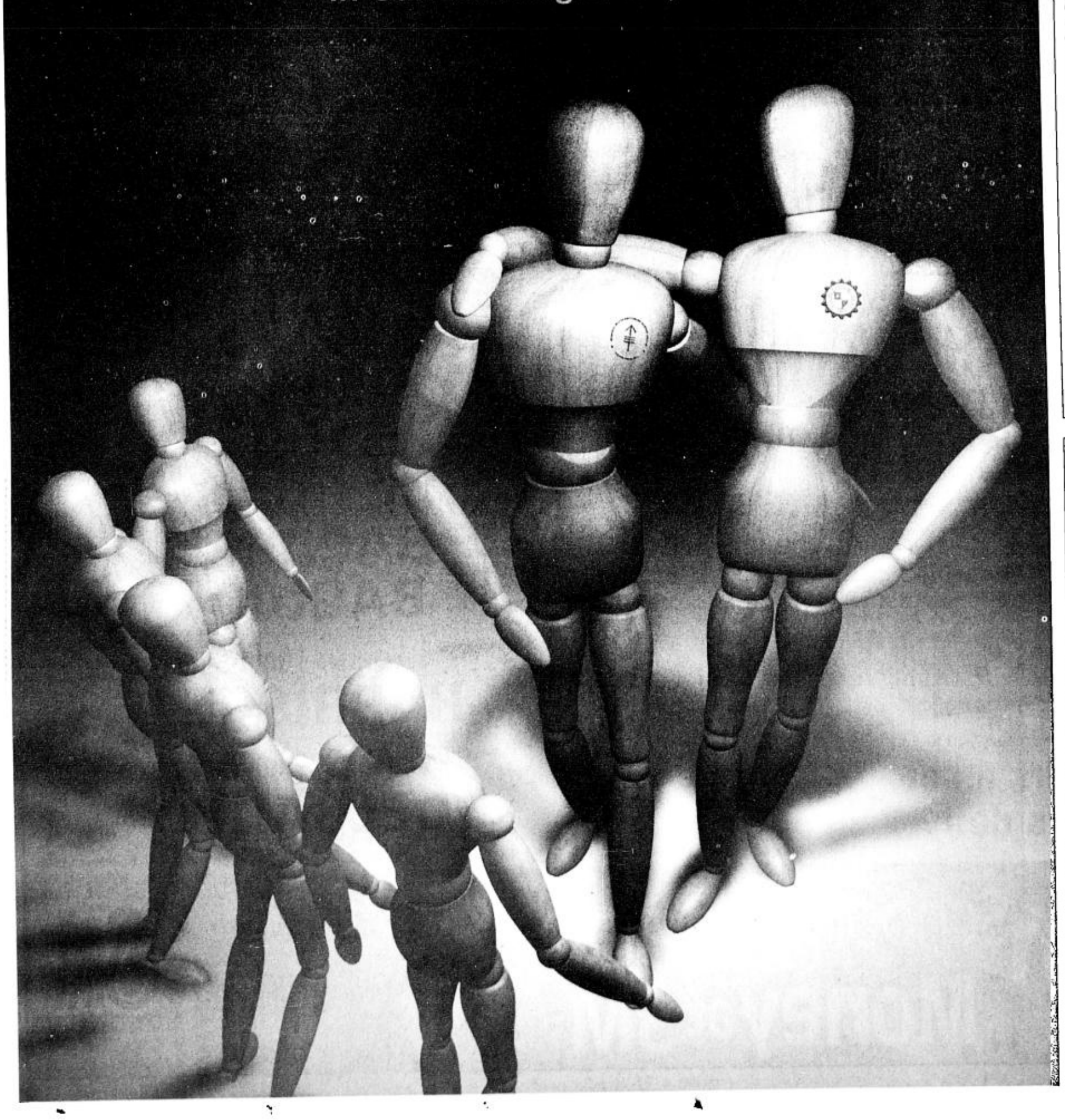

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 28, 2005
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 15:7-21
Gospel: John 15:9-11

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; remain in my love. You will remain in my love if you keep my commandments, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you all this, that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."

Commentary

These are the most awesome words of Jesus to us. We are loved by Jesus as the Father loves Jesus and we are to remain, to stay in that love. We dwell in God if we keep the commandments, if we obey and in doing this, in obeying with Jesus, then we will also know the joy of Jesus. We are to love—everyone as Jesus has loved us, laying down our lives for one another in service, in forgiveness, in justice and care, as love demands. We are to love the poor and lift them up, giving them hope and dignity as Jesus did with all in need. This is how we remain in God. In this loving and obedience to Jesus' words there is a joy that is complete, whole and life-affirming, unlike any other joy in the world. It is the sign of God's presence among us. Are we the joyful, obedient friends of God? Are we devoted to obeying God as Jesus obeyed God? What do we know of love—only what we give to others—that is all we know of the Father.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LEGAL ETHICS—Withdrawal of administrative complaint does not result in dismissal - It must be emphasized that the withdrawal of an administrative complaint by the complainant does not necessarily warrant the dismissal of the same. Administrative actions cannot depend on the will or pleasure of a complainant who may, for reasons of his own, condone what may be detestable. Neither can the Court be bound by the unilateral act of a complainant in a matter relating to its disciplinary power. After all, complainants in administrative cases against court personnel are, in a real sense, only witnesses. The withdrawal of an administrative complaint or subsequent desistance by the complainant does not free the respondent from liability, as the purpose of an administrative proceeding is to protect the public service, based on the time-honored principle that a public office is a public trust. It does not operate to divest the Court of jurisdiction to determine the truth behind the matter stated in the complaint. The Court's disciplinary authority cannot be dependent on or frustrated by private arrangements between the parties. An administrative complaint against a court official or employee cannot simply be withdrawn by a complainant who suddenly changes his mind. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Saraza v. Tam, A. M. No. P-04-1896, January 12, 2005) BY R.B. VERA

Lauro Vizconde 'seriously sick'

By Christian V. Esguerra

ANTI-CRIME advocate Lauro Vizconde is in "serious condition" at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital where he was rushed due to complications arising from diabetes and a lingering heart problem, according to his colleague at the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption Dante Jimenez.

Vizconde, head of the family killed by a former senator's son and his friends more than a decade ago, was brought to UST from his hometown San Rafael, Bulacan Monday afternoon after he had difficulty walking, Jimenez, founding chair of VACC, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"His condition is serious," Jimenez said. "I'll describe his illness as complicated."

According to Jimenez, Vizconde had difficulty walking last weekend but was only brought to the hospital for treatment four days ago.

He added that Vizconde, now in his 60s, was conscious but still could not walk.

Vizconde joined anti-crime crusaders after the massacre of his family in Parañaque in 1991. He now heads the VACC.

He found relief after Hubert Webb, son of former senator and basketball star Freddie Webb, and his five friends were sentenced to life imprisonment.

The group was convicted of raping Vizconde's 18-year-old daughter Carmela before killing her, her mother Estrelita, and 7-year-old sister Jennifer in cold blood inside their house on Vinzons Street, BF Homes.

But the elder Vizconde's ordeal is far from over, Jimenez said.

"He's still fighting to live to see the decision affirmed by the Court of Appeals," he said.

Jimenez said Vizconde was still awaiting the appellate court's review of Parañaque Judge Amelita Tolentino's decision.

"He fears that the decision might suddenly be changed," Jimenez said. "He heard so many influential people were working to get a favorable decision. This is what has been bothering Lauro."

Dentists' lecture set Sunday

THE PHILIPPINE section of the International College of Dentists, a worldwide and leading honorary dental organization dedicated to the recognition of outstanding professional achievement and meritorious services, will hold its 34th Bienvenido B. Eraña Memorial Lecture and Annual Business Meeting on Sunday.

The affair will be held at 1 p.m. at the Bayview Salon of the Hyatt Hotel and Casino in Malate.

Dr. Eduardo P. Banzon, vice president for Health Finance Policy and Services Sector for Philhealth, will be the memorial lecturer. Eleven outstanding graduates of the different dental schools and universities in the country for the year 2004-2005 will be the recipients of the ICD medallions of honor.

The 39th annual convocation and banquet will follow at 6 p.m. at the Le Salon, also at the Hyatt Hotel and Casino. Six new fellows will be inducted to the College. They are Doctors Paul Vincent D. Achacoso, Mercedes Glendora H. de Villa, Meryla T. Gonzales, Carlos D. Legislador, Luis Gerardo G. Sunico and Margaret C. Tiu.

The honorary fellowship award will be given to Dr. Manuel B. Cunanan. Adeladia I. Angeles, Romeo V. Kamantigue and Natividad M. Granada will all receive their life membership award. Immediately following is the symbolic turnover of the presidency from Ermelinda Sabater-Galang, outgoing president, to Hermogenes P. Villareal.

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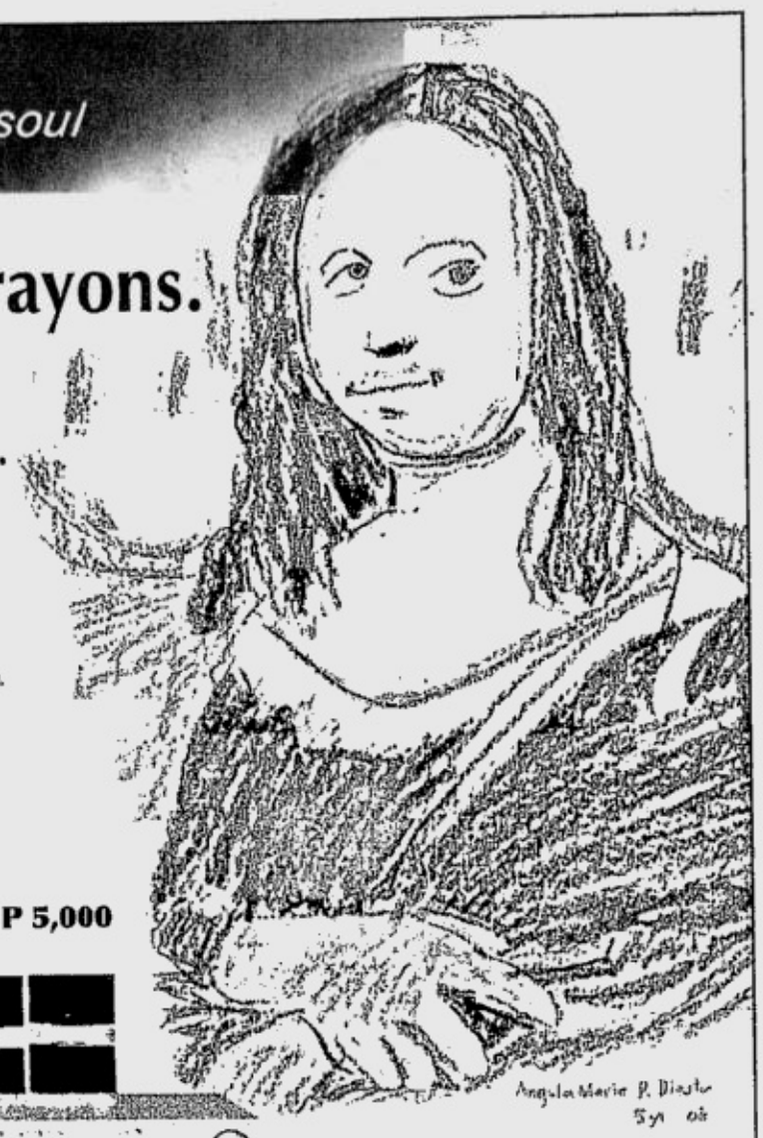

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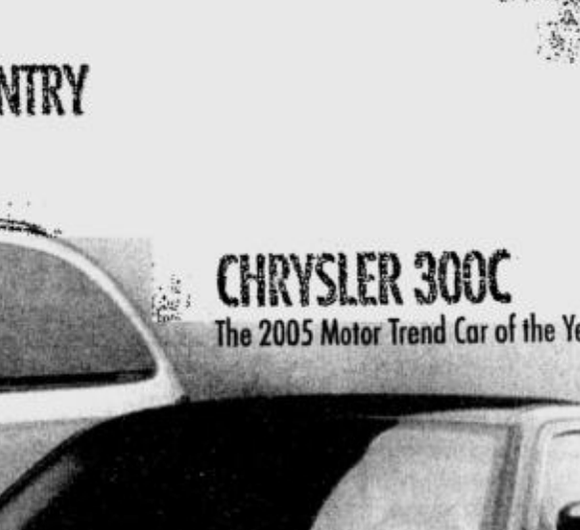

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Yorac quits PCGG post

From page A1

ditional capital of P17.8 billion for SMC, slightly diluted the government's shares and also increased the stake of Japan's Kirin Brewery Ltd. to three board seats.

The rights offering was completed three weeks ago, and the government has since lost one of its five seats in the SMC board.

But in an interview with the INQUIRER, wherein she was asked if she had been forced to resign, Yorac said: "No. No one can make me."

She said she intended to "rest for a while" and later return to law practice.

Yorac, 64, a former human rights lawyer who was jailed during martial law, is a partner of the Azcuna Yorac Sarmiento Arroyo and Chua law office.

She suffered a mild stroke in 2003 and is battling cancer.

Yorac will be replaced by Camilo Sabio, who was appointed PCGG commissioner last Oct. 21.

Why Sabio?

"Why him?" Ermita said. "I'm sure the President must have gone over his bio-data. Sabio is a good man, very competent. He is qualified."

A law graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University, Sabio is a former president of the Philippine Constitution Association and a three-term secretary general, chief counsel and chief parliamentarian of the House of Representatives.

For 20 years until he was invited to serve in the government, Sabio was chief counsel of the Federation of Free Farmers and of the Federation of Free Workers.

"To some extent, I was not surprised," Sabio said of his new appointment. "I understood I was to replace Chair Yorac when she leaves."

SABIO: I am not surprised.

Sabio said his first task was to study the cases of the PCGG and its structure. "I am honored and happy [to be appointed chair] just as I was honored and happy when I took my oath as commissioner."

Key achievements

Yorac, who served as a no-nonsense chair of the Commission on Elections for seven years, was appointed to the PCGG in 2001, shortly after Ms Arroyo took over from President Joseph Estrada.

She received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for government service last year, in recognition of her achievements as PCGG chair.

Ermita said one of Yorac's key achievements at the PCGG was the recovery of the $684-million Marcos Swiss accounts after 17 years of legal battle. (Of the amount, roughly $200 million has been set aside for victims of human rights violations during martial law, and the balance for the government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.)

He also cited among her achievements the Sandiganbayan decision upholding the government majority control of United Coconut Planters Bank and the coconut farmers' right to 27-percent shares of SMC.

These shares have been disputed by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

SMC said it had no comment for now on Yorac's resignation.

Varied reactions

A stock market analyst said Yorac's resignation should have no impact on SMC operations.

"PCGG nominees have been known to come and go in SMC's board," the analyst said.

But other analysts said there might be a slight setback because a new PCGG head would have to study issues relating to the operations of the food and beverage giant.

Cojuangco was earlier reported to have acquired an additional 26,580 class A shares, or shares offered only to Filipinos from the stock rights offer.

The ownership of a 47-percent block of SMC shares is still being contested by the government and Cojuangco in local courts.

Cojuangco, however, was allowed by the Supreme Court to hold the voting rights for 20 percent of SMC.

The government, through the PCGG, used to hold 27 percent on behalf of coconut farmers. It still has to be announced by how much the PCGG shares were diluted.

The government earlier claimed that the disputed shares were bought using funds forcibly collected from coconut farmers during the Marcos dictatorship.

With reports from Alcuin Papa and Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

She opposes Danding's control of San Miguel

From page A1

by taking in a new ally in the board (Kirin Brewery of Japan) and diluting the coconut farmers' shares.

They said Yorac had shown her independent streak just a few months as PCGG chair when she openly opposed a compromise deal arranged by President Macapagal-Arroyo's publicist, Dante Ang, on grounds that it would supposedly allow Marcos cronies led by Cojuangco to retain their alleged ill-gotten wealth.

Illegal and immoral

She described the deal as "illegal and immoral."

Since then, the associates said, Yorac had been overruled by Malacañang on key decisions affecting Cojuangco's control of SMC.

Yorac had vigorously opposed Kirin's buy-in in 2002 because the Japanese brewer would give Cojuangco more leverage in the SMC board.

Malacañang, however, stepped into the picture and allowed Kirin, which is voting with the management controlled by Cojuangco and his right-hand man Ramon Ang, to get a minority stake in SMC—but not after Yorac succeeded in demanding that the government maintain its board seats.

Early this year, Yorac also got into a tussle with the government's nominees in SMC (who were acting on orders from the top, according to her associates), for approving a management-endorsed stock rights offering.

Diluted shares

While the capital-raising exercise was meant to give SMC cheap funds for expansion and operations, the move has the effect of diluting the coconut farmers' shares in the company because the government has no money to subscribe to the rights issue.

The dilution is expected to dampen interest in President Arroyo's plan to sell the government's shares in SMC as one package, including the shares held by the Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System.

Instead of putting on the block a controlling share of the food and beverage conglomerate, the government's SMC shares would give buyers only a veto share that would be interesting only to Cojuangco and his allies.

Pressure from GMA

A lawyer-friend of Yorac's, who also declined to be identified, said the PCGG chair quit her post because of pressure from Ms Arroyo.

"The President is asking her to resign because she (Ms Arroyo) wants the sale of San Miguel to be fast-tracked. She wants to have a deal with Danding," the lawyer told the INQUIRER.

The lawyer said Ms Arroyo's emissaries had been calling Yorac in the past two months and asking her to quit because of her opposition to the sale of the government's shares in SMC.

Presidential legal counsel Merceditas Gutierrez and officials from the office of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita were among those who have been pestering Yorac to quit, the lawyer said.

Yorac was said to have asked the emissaries if they were speaking for the President, and the reply was allegedly in the affirmative.

The lawyer said Yorac had told Malacañang that she would not quit without settling the government's claim to the still contested shares in SMC. She wanted to wait for the decision of the Supreme Court on the shares.

Malacañang reportedly told her to ignore that.

'Time to move on'

But in a press conference held at her office yesterday, Yorac said she turned in her resignation last April 25 to go back to her law practice and attend to her health.

"I have resigned effective the end of the month because I wanted to go back to the private sector. This announcement is a long time in coming. I have stayed long enough; now it's time to move on," she told reporters.

Yorac was quick to dismiss rumors that Malacañang had asked for her resignation.

"I hope that no one will pressure the PCGG as I was not pressured during my time here," she said, adding:

"I am leaving not with a heavy heart. We have finished the more important cases of the Marcos wealth and the coconut levy. And I am satisfied with the judgments so far. I hope that the spirit in which we prosecuted these cases will continue."

Yorac described her job as PCGG chair as "exhilarating, hectic and satisfying."

She said one of her biggest accomplishments in the PCGG was the organization of its voluminous documents.

"We have to set the records right. When we came in, the records were in shambles, and maybe this is the reason the cases were mishandled," she said.

She also advised the media to be "vigilant" toward cases regarding the Marcos wealth.

'Almost relieved'

Asked by the INQUIRER to sum up her feelings, Yorac said: "I am almost relieved because I don't have to follow up the cases anymore."

She said she hoped that she was leaving the PCGG in good hands.

To the question of what she thought still needed to be accomplished, she said: "Pushing and protecting the coconut levy case, which is about to be completed."

Yorac is preparing her papers for a possible trip abroad.

In her resignation letter to the President, she said she had no intention of going back to a position in the government.

Will she then go back to teaching?

"I'll play it by ear," she said.

With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

Why is Mike A. always linked to corruption?

From page A1

"Why is he always implicated in every major corruption scandal? And why, despite full media coverage, nothing came out of the inquiries into these scandals?" asked Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran.

Rumors are circulating that the First Gentleman and his son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo are among the biggest recipients of payoffs from jueteng, an illegal numbers game.

A police officer claims that three relatives of a top government official known by their code names M1, M2 and JS7 are getting millions of pesos in protection money from jueteng operators.

Beltran said the insinuation that the members of the First Family were the heads of jueteng syndicates in the country were serious.

Put up or shut up

"Irritated" by continued attempts to link him to illegal activities, the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo dared his detractors to "put up or shut up."

His office issued a statement denying his involvement in jueteng.

"Mr. Arroyo is not involved and has never been involved in jueteng and totally supports all moves of the government to eradicate jueteng," lawyer Jess Santos, spokesperson of the First Gentleman, said.

The lawyer said the First Gentleman abhorred jueteng and "does not even know how to play that game."

The latest attempt to link the First Gentleman to jueteng payoffs was nothing but "dirty politics," said Santos.

In a statement issued by Arroyo's office, Santos warned that Arroyo would file charges against anyone who would allude to him and his son as recipients of jueteng money without presenting any evidence.

Cowards and gays

Santos said "only cowards and gays destroy people's reputations with lies and intrigues."

The Senate will conduct an inquiry into the reported involvement of the three relatives of a top government official.

"There's a great disparity between rumor and fact. Come to the Senate investigation that will be initiated next week, probably the rumor will become a fact," said Sen. Panfilo Lacson when interviewed in the House of Representatives shortly after Chinese President Hu Jintao addressed a joint session of Congress.

Lacson said he was not categorically naming the First Gentleman and Representatives Mikey Arroyo and Ignacio Arroyo.

"I'm not saying that it's them. I'm also not saying that it's not them. Let's wait for the investigation to unfold so that we will discover the identities of M1, M2, JS7," the senator said.

ANOTHER question for Mike A.: Why has nothing come out of the investigations of these corruption scandals?

Whistle-blower's identity

Lacson said he already disclosed to Senate President Franklin Drilon the identity of the whistle-blower.

"He was once a provincial director (before he) held a sensitive position, so he knows what he's talking about," Lacson said.

The senator said the police official was a member of a class of the Philippine Military Academy in the late 1970s.

Lacson said he wanted the Senate to subpoena the police official so that he could shed light on the jueteng payoff scandal.

"If you have goods on certain individuals, you must come out and stand up, and prove your point. I know him, but haven't talked to him on this particular issue," Lacson said.

Ignacio Arroyo

Reiterating what the First Gentleman said in his statement, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo told the whistle-blower "to put up or shut up."

"It has always been the same story. It's him again because he's a favorite punching bag of the opposition. I believe that this is another destabilization move by the opposition," said the lawmaker, younger brother of the First Gentleman.

He said his brother could not be involved in jueteng "because what he does are all about charitable works."

In Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita insisted that the Palace was "not disturbed" by the rumors linking members of the First Family to jueteng, saying these were all "innuendos."

Subpoena

Ermita said the Palace "definitely" welcomed the Senate investigation to be conducted by the Senate committee on games and amusement chaired by Sen. Lito Lapid.

"The government stands firm against anything illegal, especially illegal gambling and other organized crimes," Ermita said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, who sought the Senate inquiry, said the INQUIRER source on the jueteng payola could be subpoenaed if he did not come forward voluntarily.

"Senator (Panfilo) Lacson mentioned that he knew of this whistle-blower. If the appropriate information is given to the committee, I assume that the committee chair will call this resource person," Drilon said.

Witness Protection Program

"He can be subpoenaed assuming that his real name is revealed by Senator Lacson," he added. Drilon said the source could qualify under the Witness Protection Program. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Supreme Court orders BIR to pay informant P44M more

From page A1

he received from the BIR 17 years ago for informing the government that the Philippine National Bank failed to withhold "15 percent final tax on interest earning" or yields from the money placements of the Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) with the bank.

Payment of balance

The Supreme Court ordered the BIR to pay informant Tirso Savellano P44,243,767 representing the balance of the 15 percent "informer's reward" due him in 1988.

In a 78-page decision, the high court also ordered the BIR to collect the amount of P294,958,450.73 representing part of the P387 million plus interest withholding tax the PNOC owed the BIR.

The case stemmed from Savellano's information made to the BIR in June 24, 1986 of the failure of PNB to withhold 15 percent tax on interest earnings and yields from the money the PNOC placed at the bank, in violation of pertinent laws.

Computed that year, PNOC's liability stood at P304 million, without interest. A year later, a "compromise" was reached between the BIR and PNOC where PNOC was to pay P91 million, representing 30 percent of the P303 million basic tax. PNB also paid P2.9 million.

Then BIR Commissioner Bienvenido A. Tan wrote Savellano on June 22, 1987 offering to pay him P14,093,321.89 representing 15 percent of the P93,955,479.12 the BIR collected from the PNOC and the PNB.

Savellano got the amount on Dec. 1, 1987.

Higher assessment

But a year later, through his counsel, Savellano wrote the BIR claiming that based on his assessment, the BIR should have asked for "P385,961,580.82" in tax. He also said that he should have been paid P57,894,237 in informer's reward and that the BIR owes him P43.8 million.

He also questioned the "legality of the compromise agreement entered into by the BIR and the PNOC and claimed that the tax liability should have been collected in full."

In 1988, he brought the matter before the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) as he charged Tan with "grave abuse of discretion" and "whimsical exercise of jurisdiction" in entering into an agreement that resulted in the "diminution" of his reward.

When the CTA ruled in Savellano's favor, the PNOC and the PNB brought the matter to the high court.

Contrary to public policy

In its April 26 ruling, the high tribunal agreed with Savellano in finding Tan acting "in excess or in abuse of the authority granted him" by entering into a compromise agreement.

"The compromise, moreover, was contrary to public policy. The primary duty of the BIR is to collect taxes, since taxes are the lifeblood of the government," it said, adding that "by entering into the compromise agreement that was bereft of legal basis, would have caused the government to lose almost P300 million in tax revenues and would have deprived the government of much needed monetary resources."

It then declared the compromise agreement "void for being contrary to the law and public policy, and is without force and effect."

Entitled to whole amount

As to Savellano's increased reward, the high court said he is entitled to the whole amount as provided for in the National Internal Revenue Code, which provides for an informer's reward "equivalent to 15 percent of the revenues, surcharges, or fees recovered, plus, any fine or penalty imposed and collected."

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DO YOU DARE?

THE CHINESE way is to applaud back. China President Hu Jintao had many occasions to do so during his address to a joint session of Congress. His visit also marks the 30th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic ties between the Philippines and China during the Marcos regime. REM ZAMORA

A TOTAL of 14 investment agreements worth $1.6-B are signed between China and the Philippines after the meetings of their respective Presidents, Hu and Ms Arroyo, at the Palace. Not bad for an hour-long meeting. EDWIN BACASMAS

Hu heralds dawn of RP-China 'golden age'

By Michael Lim Ubac

CHINESE president Hu Jintao urged the Philippines to turn the disputed South China Sea into a "sea of friendship and cooperation," saying Asia "is our common home whose prosperity bears on our common destiny."

Addressing a joint session of Congress, Hu heralded the dawn of the "golden age" of Philippine-China relations.

"As President Arroyo rightly pointed out, China-Philippine relationship is in a golden age. I cannot agree with her more," said Hu, eliciting loud applause from the members of Congress and guests, including former President Fidel Ramos and former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

The Philippines and China established diplomatic ties in June 1975 during the tenure of Ferdinand Marcos.

Applause 7 times

Hu, who earlier met with President Macapagal-Arroyo, said in a 15-minute speech interrupted seven times by applause that the two countries had "taken the lead in making the breakthrough in joint development" (oil exploration) in the South China Sea, which includes the Philippines' Spratlys Islands.

"Let's join hands, seize the opportunities, be innovative and work together to add a new chapter of China-Philippine amity, good neighborliness and cooperation and create a better future for our region," he said.

He said both countries stood for the building of a "strategic and cooperative relationship for peace and development on the basis of a time-honored friendship between the two countries and the two people."

Mutual trust

Hu also emphasized "political mutual trust" as an important basis for the development of relations between the two countries for the the past 30 years.

To assuage critics of China's growing economic dominance in Asia, Hu said his nation of 1.3 billion people would pursue an independent foreign policy of peace "and stick to the path of peaceful development."

Aware that the Philippines was exploring other economic partners, Hu said China would not want that "friendly neighbors" should be left behind in terms of development.

"(The Chinese policy) stands for a new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, seeks to settle existing differences through dialogue and promotes common security through cooperation," he said.

After boasting about the robust growth (average of 9 percent yearly) of China, he pushed for his country and the Philippines to enhance personnel exchanges at all levels and in all fields, expand trade, increase cooperation, and support the comprehensive tariff reduction in Asia and members of the Southeast Asian Nations.

Sultan of Sulu

Turning to history, he called the Philippines a "friendly neighbor" separated only by a strip of water yet enjoying a traditional friendship dating to ancient times.

"We began to trade over a thousand years ago. More than 500 years ago, the Sultan of Sulu embarked on a trip of friendship to China, carrying with him the goodwill of the Philippine people and leaving behind moving stories of China-Philippine amity," said Hu.

He also noted that over a hundred years ago, the Chinese, who sailed to the Philippines, "lived harmoniously with the local people and forged brotherly affinity."

He said the friendship had "withstood the test of time" and thus strengthening "mutually beneficial cooperation is not only necessary ... but helps broaden our common interests."

Fruits of relations

"Looking back, we can take justified pride in the rich fruits of our relations. Looking ahead, we see still greater accomplishment in our cooperation. We from China are fully ready to work with our Philippine friends from all walks of life to build on the past and usher in a better future," he said. *With a report from Dano Tingcungco*

Oops, Guingona still needs to get formal confirmation

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

FORMER Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr.'s formal confirmation as ambassador to China was postponed yesterday after the Commission on Appointments fell short of one member to constitute a quorum.

Guingona's appointment was approved on Tuesday by the CA's foreign relations committee after only one hearing, a rare feat in the powerful body known for extensive grilling of presidential appointees.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, vice chair of the CA foreign relations committee, said the nomination was good as confirmed after hurdling the committee level.

She said the committee wanted the nomination confirmed by the plenary, or by all members of the CA from the Senate and the House, also last Tuesday in time for the state visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao.

"We wanted to finish this in the plenary since there was no sworn opposition (to his appointment). Hu is arriving in the evening and he (Guingona) was designated his minister-in-waiting," Marcos said.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon denied the request, saying Guingona should wait for the CA's regular plenary session, which is held every Wednesday.

Marcos said Drilon explained that the CA had already waived so many requirements for Guingona.

Guingona arrived early for the plenary yesterday but it could not start because less than 13 members were present. By 1:30 p.m., there were only 11 members in the hall. Calls were made to some senators.

"If we don't have a quorum at 2 o'clock we just have to (postpone it)," Drilon told the CA members.

At 2 p.m., Sen. Serge Osmeña arrived but the CA still lacked one member. Drilon said the confirmation would be held on Wednesday and would no longer be derailed.

Because of the snag, Guingona is now "literally minister (ambassador)-in-waiting," Marcos said.

China, RP sign investments worth $1.6B

From page A1

$500 million in cheap loans for the Northrail project and to look for oil off the western coast of Palawan.

The agreements, consisting of 10 government-to-government and four business-to-business deals, were signed after Hu and Ms Arroyo concluded a bilateral meeting in Malacañang.

One of the business-to-business deals was the $27-million supply contract signed by Digitel president John Gokongwei and Huawei official, Gao Wubing.

The contract involves a project of integrated GSM system between Huawei and Digitel Telecommunications.

China has also inked an agreement with Manila to open a consulate in Laoag City in Ilocos Norte, its second consulate office in the country. Its other consulate is located in Cebu City.

The Philippines has consulates in Xiamen and Shanghai.

Ms Arroyo is also expected to edge toward closer security ties during Hu's state visit, despite concerns by some senior Philippine military officers that this could irritate the country's traditional ally, the United States.

China agreed to give the Philippines $1.2 million in military assistance when Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz visited China last year and the two countries said they planned to increase exchanges between military officers.

Diversify

Following the signing of the agreements, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said Hu's state visit would "go a long way in further diversifying the Philippine economy."

He pointed out that the memorandum of agreement on the Early Harvest Agreement "initiated our free trade agreement."

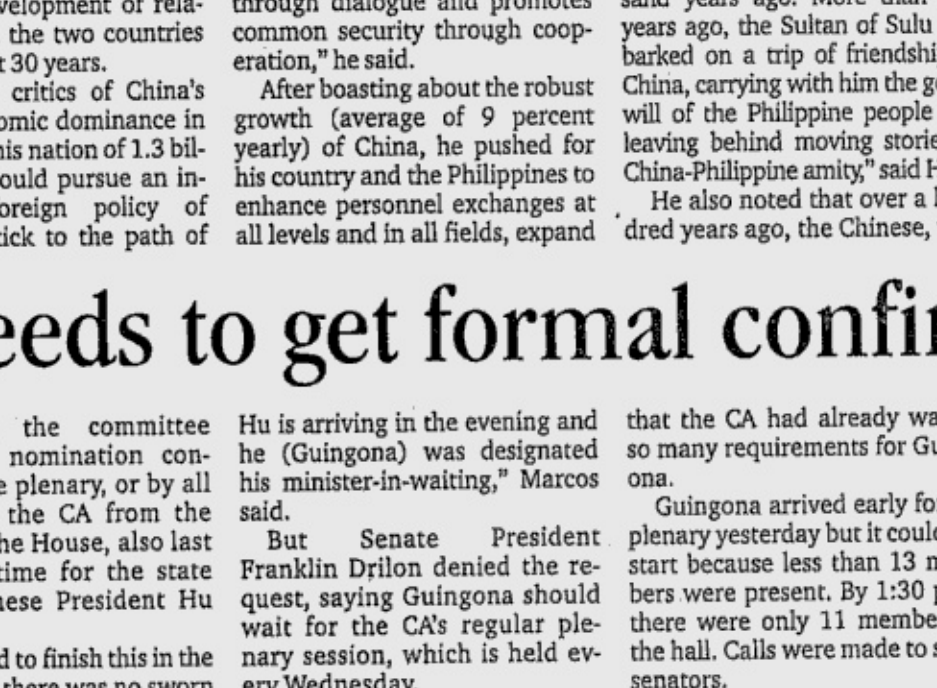
China now ranks as the Philippines' fourth-biggest trade partner with a volume of $13.3 billion in 2004 from 12th biggest in 2001.

"The target is to have $30 billion trade by 2010," Purisima told reporters.

Agro-technical exchanges

Trade Secretary Juan Santos and China's Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai signed memoranda of understanding (MOU) on the promotion of trade and investment cooperation and on infrastructure cooperation as well as an agreement on economic and technical cooperation.

The MOU on trade and investment cooperation focuses on key sectors for coordination and cooperation between the two countries, including agriculture, mining, infrastructure, information and communications technology, science and technology, energy, services, tourism, customs, quarantine and sanitary and phytosanitary procedures, standards and conformity assessment and intellectual property rights.



THE STATE VISITOR is not spared the discontent of the urban poor who picket the House of Representatives to protest the dislocation of hundreds of poor families along the Chinese-funded Northrail project. ERIK ARAZAS

The MOU likewise urges Philippine and Chinese companies to actively cooperate in mineral resource exploration, development and infrastructure construction. The cooperation in the mining sector is mandated by the Philippines-China MOU on mining cooperation, which was signed in Beijing last Jan. 18.

Oil exploration

State-owned China National Offshore Oil Co. (CNOOC) agreed with the Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) on a possible $10-million investment to look for oil in the Calamian area off Palawan.

PNOC president Eduardo Mañalac said the government expected to award CNOOC a service contract by September to drill for oil there.

The MOU on infrastructure cooperation, like the one on trade and investment cooperation, also covers various key areas in the country.

Focus is given on the fields of railway, electric power, energy and construction, but other infrastructure can also qualify for possible cooperation.

The agreement on economic and technical cooperation entails a grant of 20 million RMB (about $2.5 million) from China. *With a report from Reuters*

Ex-AFP chief faces graft raps

SANTIAGO FILE PHOTO

From page A1

appointed executive director of the Dangerous Drugs Board.

Should the graft case prosper, Santiago would be the second ex-military chief—after retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia—to be investigated by the Ombudsman for alleged graft.

A number of retired generals are also facing corruption charges—Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, a former comptroller; Lt. Gen. Jacinto Ligot, his predecessor; Brig. Gen. Prospero Ocampo, a former commander of the Air Force 570th Composite Tactical Wing; Maj. Gen. Ralph Flores, a former chief of the Air Logistics Supply Command; and Rear Adm. Joaquin Tan, a former Navy Vice Commander.

Turn of events

On March 2003, the AFP Commissioned Officers Country released P8 million through Centennial Bank check No. 0000530806 to the AFP care of Santiago, the then chief of staff, to renovate the AFPCOC swimming pool.

Santiago kept the check and paid the general contractor, Ramona Serevilla, himself, according to the investigation.

Investigators reportedly believe that the renovation cost only around P2 million.

On June 2, 2003, nearly two months after he retired, Santiago deposited the P8-million check into his account at the Centennial Bank Central Office.

In a letter last Feb. 24 to the OESPA chief, Vice Adm. Ariston de los Reyes, Santiago insisted there was nothing irregular in the improvements made in the swimming pool.

But he admitted "it was a mistake to hold on [to] the money" and to pay the contractor himself "to ensure completion of the project."

Earlier, on Feb. 11, the contractor Serevilla wrote the OESPA that she had returned the entire P8 million to the AFPCOC through BPI manager's check No. 0000003884.

Articles of War

In her letter, Serevilla said Santiago had paid her the advances she made for the swimming pool's renovation.

But the investigation report said Santiago "has violated Articles of War 95 (Frauds Against the Government) in relation to Sec. 3 (e) and (g) of Republic Act 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act) for allegedly defrauding the government when he kept the check and deposited [it] to his account after his retirement.

"Although the contractor refunded the amount to AFPCOC, the offense was already consummated," it added.

The investigators recommended that the case be referred to the Office of the Ombudsman for preliminary investigation.

33% of ...

From page A1

age as in the October survey.

Twenty-seven percent said their clothing was inadequate compared to 36 percent in October.

World Bank figures show that 42.39 percent of Filipinos live on $2 dollars a day or less.

Pulse Asia also warned that the country was facing a "critical juncture," with a looming fiscal crisis that must be properly addressed if the Philippines is to avoid economic deterioration, political instability and possibly social upheaval.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has proposed critical revenue measures to avoid the fiscal crisis but Congress has turned down some of these measures and delayed passing others. AFP

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER A1

20 US military advisers arrive in Sulu

A 20-MAN team of American military advisers has arrived in Sulu to plan future humanitarian activities in the strife-torn island province.

The public affairs officer of the Joint United States Military Assistance Group in the country said the team will make their assessment during the next two weeks.

"These experts will help determine where, when and how US resources can best complement the Armed Forces's efforts to improve the security environment, access to medical care and create a stable environment for economic development for the residents of Jolo," said Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly in a statement.

The US team, headed by Col. Greg Wilson, commander of the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P), will coordinate with local officials, military officials and civic leaders to assess future humanitarian projects.

The US humanitarian assistance was made at the request of the Philippine government, said Donnelly.

Government forces have been battling loyalists of detained Moro National Liberation Front rebel leader Nur Misuari and Abu Sayyaf rebels in Sulu province since February 1.

The fighting has since killed nearly 40 soldiers and around 70 to 100 rebels.

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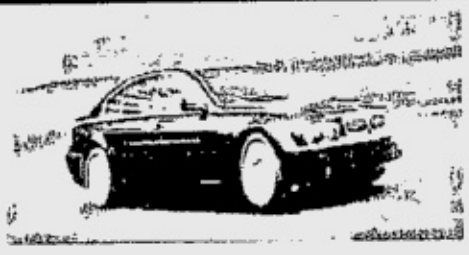
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Israelis stage protest vs Gaza pullout

NEVE DEKALIM, Gaza Strip—Thousands of Israelis poured into the Gaza Strip's main Jewish settlement bloc Wednesday to protest this summer's planned withdrawal, show support for the settlers and bid farewell to the area Israel occupied for 38 years.

Gaza settler leaders said they expect at least 100,000 people, which would make it one of the largest demonstrations since Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced the pullout plan last year. Turnout was expected to be bolstered by warm weather and the Passover holiday, when schools are closed and many people are on vacation.

Some settler leaders have expressed hope that the protesters will stay in Gaza to resist the withdrawal. However, Avner Shimon, mayor of the Gaza settlements, said he expected the visitors to leave after Passover.

"People are coming to enjoy themselves, see the place and hug us and to tell us they are with us. I estimate that nobody will remain when it is over," he told Israel Army Radio.

Early Wednesday, the Israeli army closed the main crossing into the Gush Katif bloc of settlements to private cars, allowing only buses through. Army Radio said 1,500 buses were expected to reach Gush Katif.

Organizers were selling orange flags and T-shirts, symbols of opposition to the withdrawal. During the day, event, organizers planned a march through Gaza's seaside settlements and a rally.

Under the plan, Israel will withdraw from all 21 Gaza settlements as well as four small settlements in the West Bank. About 9,000 Jewish settlers are slated to be evacuated from their homes.

Sharon says the withdrawal will improve Israel's security while enabling him to cement Israeli control over large blocs of settlements in the West Bank. Since Sharon announced the plan, settlers have held a number of large rallies in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Wednesday's rally was expected to be the largest protest inside Gaza so far.

"We want to create a sense in the public that this move is illegitimate," said Chaniel Nahari, who came to Wednesday's protest from his home in central Israel. "The government is caving in to terror and isn't achieving anything."

Nahari and his wife, Tovie, both schoolteachers, said they plan on moving to Gaza in about six weeks and will stay with friends throughout the withdrawal. They said they plan only passive resistance, but conceded there may be some extremists who will use violence against troops carrying out the evacuation.

The withdrawal is currently scheduled to begin in late July. But the government is considering a three-week delay that would push back the plan until Aug. 15. A formal decision on the date is expected next week.

Sharon has said he would favor the delay out of respect for a three-week mourning period on the Jewish calendar.

But there is widespread speculation that the government isn't prepared, in part because of widespread settler opposition. The government has made little progress in paying compensation to settlers slated for evacuation, and it remains unclear where the settlers will relocate inside Israel. *AP*

POPE JOHN PAUL II

Iraqi premier finally unveils Cabinet list

BAGHDAD—Iraq's proposed Cabinet list was handed to President Jalal Talabani, after nearly three months of lengthy talks, as kidnappers of three Romanian journalists gave Bucharest a Wednesday ultimatum on withdrawing its troops from Iraq.

A restricted meeting of prime minister-designate Ibrahim al-Jaafari's winning United Iraqi Alliance was the venue for the long-awaited unveiling Tuesday of the Cabinet, according to Iraqiya TV. It was not immediately known when parliament would be asked to approve it, however.

The kidnappers of three Romanian journalists meanwhile have given Bucharest until 1300 GMT to announce the withdrawal of its 860 troops from Iraq in order to save the journalists' lives, Al-Jazeera television reported.

According to Iraqiya television, Sadoun Dulaimi, a Sunni, was named as defense minister in the new government.

In addition, Jaafari has named three deputy premiers in an attempt to spread power among the country's ethnic groups.

Roj Nuri Shaways, a Kurd, former Pentagon favorite Ahmed Chalabi, and Sunni Saad al-Lehebi were all named as deputy premiers, Iraqiya reported.

Jaafari's list includes several outgoing ministers remaining in their posts, including Hoshyar Zebari, a Kurd, as foreign minister and Nasreen Mustafa Barwari as minister of public works.

In addition, Sami al-Majoun was named minister of justice and Ali Abdul Amir Allawi minister of finance, according to a partial list provided by the television.

Supporters of outgoing Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, a secular pro-Western Shiite, were not expected to participate in the new government after Jaafari rejected their terms.

Three Sunni members of the UIA said Tuesday they were withdrawing from the alliance, which holds 146 seats in the 275-member parliament, for being too "sectarian," Mudher Shawket, one of the three, said.

The majority Shiites were expected to hold 17 Cabinet seats. The Kurds, who have 77 seats, were expected to get eight, and the Sunni Arabs six.

Sunnis dominated Saddam Hussein's regime and all previous Iraqi governments but won just 17 seats in parliament after largely boycotting the Jan. 30 election.

The Christian and Turkmen minorities were expected to get one ministry each.

Washington expressed concerns ongoing deadlock was squandering political momentum toward democracy created by the successful election.

"I think everybody believes that the Iraqi people now deserve a government, given that they took (a) risk to vote," said US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"We've had opportunities to represent those views to a number of Iraqi leaders," she said. "And we're going to continue to say that it is important to keep momentum in the political process."

Iraqi police meanwhile hailed what they termed a major coup against Sunni Arab insurgents, announcing the arrests of 305 suspects, including 11 from other Arab countries. *AFP*

Many Catholics not ready to let go of Pope John Paul

VATICAN CITY—To get an idea of the challenges facing Pope Benedict, look no further than the Vatican City gift shops still gleefully peddling images of his predecessor.

More than three weeks after his death, Pope John Paul survives as the top selling Vatican souvenir—his smiling face posthumously adorning posters, pendants and jewelry boxes, the same way it did during his 26-year pontificate.

Pilgrims still mostly pick postcards of the photogenic Pole to say hello to loved ones back home, instead of sending snapshots of the bookish Benedict, whose election last week made him the first German Pontiff in many centuries.

"We're selling more Pope John Paul II than Pope Benedict XVI," said Cristina de la Cruz, working behind the counter at a shop near Pope Benedict's former residence.

"I think it's too soon for people to move on."

The cardinals who elected Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger a week ago clearly sought continuity. In one of the swiftest conclaves in a century, they picked the Vatican's doctrinal watchdog for the past 23 years to lead the world's 1.1 billion Catholics.

Seen by critics as a hard-nosed conservative and hailed by allies as a humble intellectual, Benedict is not expected to lead the same commanding performances as John Paul, a former actor who reveled in the spotlight.

Preferring the quiet life, Benedict even told pilgrims on Monday that he had begged God not to make him Pope and compared his election to facing the "guillotine."

Since emerging from the conclave, Benedict's public appearances have appeared measured, and his facial expressions seem to wander between excitement and stage fright. *Reuters*

World terror attacks tripled in 2004, says US

WASHINGTON—The US count of major world terrorist attacks more than tripled in 2004, a rise that may revive debate on whether the Bush administration is winning the war on terrorism, congressional aides said on Tuesday.

The number of "significant" international terrorist attacks rose to about 650 last year from about 175 in 2003, according to congressional aides briefed on the numbers by US state department and intelligence officials on Monday.

The aides were told the surge partly reflected increased violence in India and Pakistan related to the Himalayan region of Kashmir, which both countries claim, and the devotion of more manpower to the US monitoring effort, which resulted in more attacks being counted.

The state department last year initially released erroneous figures that understated the attacks and casualties in 2003 and used the figures to argue that the Bush administration was prevailing in the war on terrorism.

It later said the number of people killed and injured in 2003 was more than double its original count. It also said "significant" terrorist attacks—those that kill or seriously injure someone, cause more than $10,000 in damage or attempt to do either of those things—rose to a 20-year high of 175.

The state department last week unleashed a new debate about the numbers by saying it would no longer release them in its annual terrorism report but that the newly created National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) that compiles the data would do so. The CIA last week said no decisions had been made.

However, a US intelligence official who asked not to be named said that the figures will be released on Friday.

Rep. Henry Waxman, a California Democrat, wrote to US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Tuesday asking her to release the data, which include only international attacks and exclude violence that is classified as purely domestic.

"The large increases in terrorist attacks reported in 2004 may undermine administration claims of success in the war on terror, but political inconvenience has never been a legitimate basis for withholding facts from the American people," Waxman said in the letter, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters.

Former intelligence official Larry Johnson last week first disclosed the 2004 increase in his Web log, saying the 2004 numbers would rise at least 655 from about 172 in 2003.

Waxman's letter said that of the about 650 significant attacks last year, about 300 reflected violence in India and Pakistan, leaving some 350 attacks elsewhere in the world—double the total 2003 count.

He suggested this reflected enhanced US efforts to monitor media reports of violence, thereby leading to the identification of "many more attacks in India and Pakistan related to Kashmir." He also said congressional aides were told of about 198 attacks in Iraq in 2004, up from 22 in 2003.

Congressional aides said about 10 full-time employees worked on the 2004 count, up from about three in past years, and that this produced a more complete count.

"What it effectively means is that the Bush administration and the CIA haven't been putting the staff resources necessary and have missed (two thirds) of the world's terrorist incidents," said a Democratic congressional aide. "How can you have an effective counterterrorism policy from that?"

A Republican congressional aide said it would be unfair of Democrats to claim terrorism was getting worse under the Bush administration, stressing that the 2004 and 2003 numbers were not counted in the same way and hence were not comparable. *Reuters*

NEW RECORD

British explorers beat Peary, reach North Pole in 37 days

TORONTO—A five-person team using huskies and wooden sledges reached the North Pole, setting a world record by coming in several hours earlier than a 37-day trek by American explorer Robert E. Peary for the same journey in 1909, the expedition team said.

British explorer Tom Avery had set out to prove that it was possible to make the 765-km trip from Cape Columbia in northern Nunavut, the Inuit territory of Canada opposite Greenland, in the time claimed by Peary.

The team of four men and an American woman, Mattie McNair—leading the chief sled dog Raven—was even faster in the end, claiming to set a world record by arriving 4 hours and 49 minutes ahead of Peary's pace Tuesday, relying on the methods that Peary had to rely on for his trek.

"We are just so unbelievably excited to be here and even though it's been the longest and possibly the hardest 37 day of our lives, the journey has left us literally feeling on top of the world," Avery said in a statement from the North Pole.

For decades, skeptics said Peary, who traveled with fellow American Matthew Henson and four Inuit men, could not have made the trip in only 37 days. The fastest journey that anyone had managed since Peary's day was by a Canadian team in 2000, which reached the Pole after 43 days.

Avery's team traveled in a similar style to Peary, using Canadian Inuit huskies and replica wooden sledges.

"We have always believed that Peary was one of the greatest explorers of all time and hopefully our recreation of his journey will silence anyone who doubted this and put the controversy to rest once and for all," he said.

After reaching the North Pole at 1332 GMT, the exhausted explorers raised the Nunavut, American, Canadian, British, and South African flags, mirroring an act of triumph by Peary and his men nearly a century earlier.

Avery, who was also promoting London's 2012 Olympic bid during his expedition, is a 29-year-old polar explorer from Sussex, England. In 2002 he became the youngest Briton to reach the South Pole, although that record was beaten weeks later by Andrew Cooney, 23, from Nottinghamshire.

Barclays Capital Ultimate North Expedition, sponsored by Barclay's Capital and the Prince's Trust, was comprised of Avery; South African Andrew Gerber, a business consultant; McNair, a native of Pennsylvania who runs an Arctic adventure outfit; George Wells, a property developer from Suffolk, England; and Hugh Dale-Harris, a Canadian teacher and dog driver. *AP*

IN THIS image provided by Barclays Capital, the Barclays Capital Ultimate North Expedition Team celebrates their successful reach of the North Pole, April 26. The five-person team which reached the North Pole on Tuesday (from left to right) are: Matty McNair, George Wells, Tom Avery, Hugh Dale-Harris and Andrew Gerber. AP

INQBOX
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TV Image shows the giant double-decker Airbus A380, the world's largest commercial airliner, taking off on its maiden flight, launching a new era in civil aviation, April 27 from the Toulouse-Blagnac airport. In a momentous gamble for Airbus Industrie, the new plane challenges the Boeing 747's long dominance of the jumbo jet market. AFP

Biggest airliner takes off on maiden flight

TOULOUSE, France—The world's biggest airliner, the Airbus double-decker A380, soared effortlessly into the sky on Wednesday on one of the most eagerly awaited maiden flights since the supersonic Concorde took off in 1969.

The A380, which is designed to carry 555 passengers but has room for more than 800, lumbered down the runway before gathering speed and taking off from Airbus headquarters near Toulouse in southern France.

Thousands of enthusiasts cheered outside the perimeter fence as the plane, carrying just a six-man test crew, pulled away over open countryside toward the Atlantic Ocean.

Some spectators had camped out for days to see it take off on its first flight, expected to last from two to four hours.

The A380 is a key weapon in the battle by Airbus, in which European aerospace group EADS has an 80 percent stake, to keep its edge over US plane maker Boeing Co. Boeing is banking on customers wanting to buy smaller long-range airliners.

It has taken more than a decade and some $12 billion euros ($15.68 billion) to develop the A380. It has been subsidized by European governments and has yet to prove it can make a profit.

The A380 ended the four-decade reign of Boeing's 747 jumbo as the biggest airliner to have flown. It looks like a 747 with the upper deck stretched all the way back to the tail.

French President Jacques Chirac has hailed the project as "an immense European success" and described the new plane as a "cruise ship of the skies."

The new aircraft is 15 meters wider, 4 meters taller, 2 meters longer and 118 tons heavier than the 747 jumbo, which helped change the airline business.

The length of eight London buses, the A380 has enough room on its wings to park 70 cars.

Airbus plans to complete flight tests in just over a year, allowing Singapore Airlines to begin service in 2006. The first freighter version is scheduled for delivery in 2008.

Airbus has a combined 154 orders and commitments from 15 customers. The plane has a list price of $285 million.

Airbus has already celebrated by throwing a gala unveiling in January attended by heads of state and thousands of guests, but more orders will be needed to make the plane profitable. *Reuters*

UN to verify Syria's pullout from Lebanon

UNITED NATIONS—The United Nations on Tuesday said it would await verification that Syria has pulled out of Lebanon, while acknowledging that other moves demanded by the Security Council have not yet taken place.

In a report released hours after Syria declared its 29-year troop presence in Lebanon was over, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said the claim would be tested by a team of military experts who arrived in Damascus on Tuesday.

The team "will report to me and complete its work as soon as possible," Annan said, adding that no progress had been made on other key provisions of Security Council Resolution 1559.

That measure, steered through the council by France and the United States in September, demanded the withdrawal of all foreign forces and the disbanding of militias such as Hezbollah, and called for free and fair Lebanese elections.

Calling Syria's claimed pullout "an open question which we can't take a stand on," a senior UN official who asked not to be named said the verification team would update Annan within a week.

"They were asked to report back to the secretary general in a week's time assessing the practical difficulties, if any, they will meet. And we will then on that basis decided on how to proceed," the official said.

"What the verification team will ask Syria to do is to give us a complete overview of the locations of all Syrian forces, including the intelligence forces, with precise locations," he said. They would then check the sites.

"The implementation of this resolution would be very significant, not only for the region but also for the UN as an organization," the official said.

In his report, Annan said he had been told that some Syrian intelligence forces—who played a crucial role in Syria's long years of control over its smaller neighbor—had stayed behind in some locations in Lebanon.

"The governments of Lebanon and Syria have assured me that this is not the case," Annan said, nevertheless acknowledging the "difficulties" of a full withdrawal given Syrian history in the country.

The official said there was a problem "per se" in verifying that plainclothes intelligence forces had left but said the United Nations was waiting for the report from the verification mission.

He also underlined Annan's insistence on going ahead with elections in Lebanon next month on schedule, something Lebanon's prime minister-designate Nagib Miqati has said he would press for.

But finding a compromise on an electoral law that would win the backing of both the opposition and pro-Syrian loyalists is one of the stumbling blocks facing the new government, which was formed only last week.

"What we do expect is that there would be an electoral law which can be agreed by a broad spectrum of the political players," the UN official said.

The official added that there was "good hope" that international elections observers would be sent for the polls, adding that there was no formal agreement on the question so far.

Annan's report said there was "no progress" on the disarming of militias such as Hezbollah, which helped bring Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon to an end in may 2000, and Miqati stressed that was not an immediate option.

"The government considers that the armed Lebanese resistance epitomizes the people's right to defend its land and dignity against Israeli aggression and threats until the complete liberation of Lebanese territory," he said. *AFP*

SRI Lankans stare at the wreck of a passenger bus which collided with an express train in Polgahawela, central Sri Lanka April 27. REUTERS

50 dead in Sri Lanka's train, bus collision

POLGAHAWELA, Sri Lanka—An intercity passenger train collided with a bus that tried to dash through a railroad crossing in northwestern Sri Lanka on Wednesday, killing at least 50 people and injuring 40 others, police said. But the local hospital put the death toll at 35.

The passenger bus, apparently racing another bus, slipped past a barrier and tried to cross a railroad track at Polgahawela, a small suburban town surrounded by rice and coconut farming villages. The area is about 80 km northeast of Colombo.

The bus was reduced to a mangled heap of metal after it caught fire. There were opened suitcases with passengers' clothes strewn on the track and on the sides.

Police at the scene first reported that at least 50 people died when the bus and train collided, while 40 others were injured, 30 of them seriously, police spokesperson Rienzie Perera said in Colombo. Some of the seriously wounded were being brought to National Hospital in Colombo, he said.

But Dr. Ananda Goonesekara, the director of the local hospital said 35 people have died. The National Hospital in Colombo said nine of the wounded, including a 4-year-old girl, were in critical condition.

All the victims were aboard the bus, which was dragged by the train for about 100 meters after the collision. The train driver was, however, admitted to the local hospital for unexplained reasons.

Railway employee, E.M. Jayaratna, who was on duty, said the automatic gate had closed as the train was approaching. "There were other vehicles waiting, but this bus overtook them and came near the gate," he said. "They thought they will manage to speedup and cross, but it did not happen," said Jayaratna. *AP*

US doubts fate of N. Korea nuclear talks

BEIJING—The top US diplomat on the North Korean nuclear crisis said on Wednesday that the fate of six-party talks on the issue was in doubt, signaling a limit to Washington's patience.

US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill arrived in Beijing on Tuesday to try to find a way to entice the North back into talks on its nuclear programs that have been stalled for nearly a year. China has hosted three inconclusive rounds of the negotiations.

"The future of talks is very much uncertain at this point," Hill told reporters as he left his hotel. "We continue to have a North Korean regime that is very ambivalent about whether it wants to find a negotiated settlement to this."

North Korea said explicitly for the first time in February that it had nuclear weapons, ratcheting up the crisis that began in 2002 over what Washington said was its enrichment of uranium that could be used to make weapons.

The US point man on North Korea had arrived from Seoul and was flying on to Tokyo on Wednesday to try to revive the talks, which were last held in June.

North Korea has since refused to return to the table for negotiations which include the United States, China, South Korea, Japan and Russia, citing what it calls a "hostile" US policy, but Hill said he had not yet run out of patience.

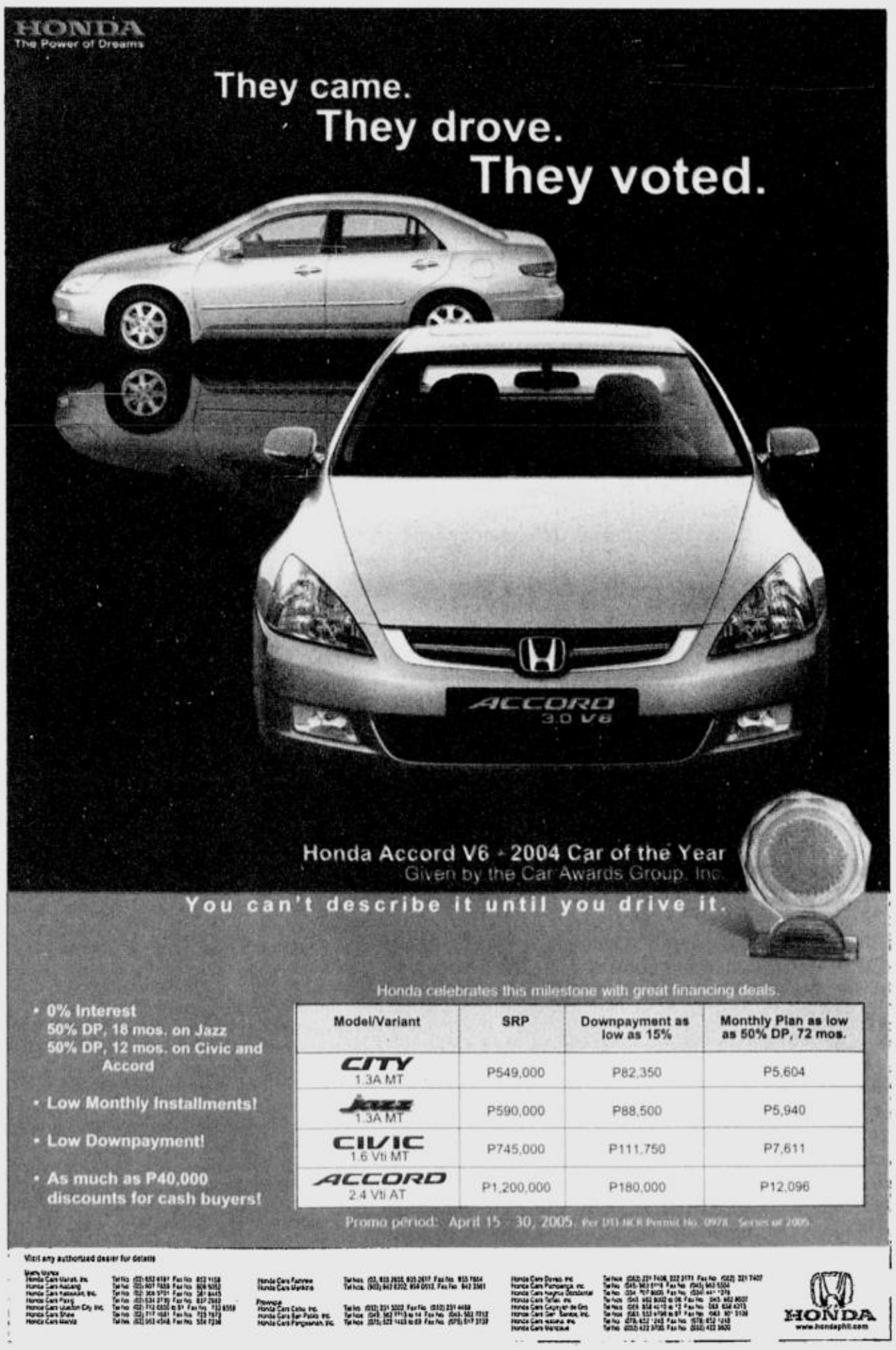
"I don't want to get into artificial deadlines. We continue to believe that this is the best way to solve this," he said, referring to the six-party process.

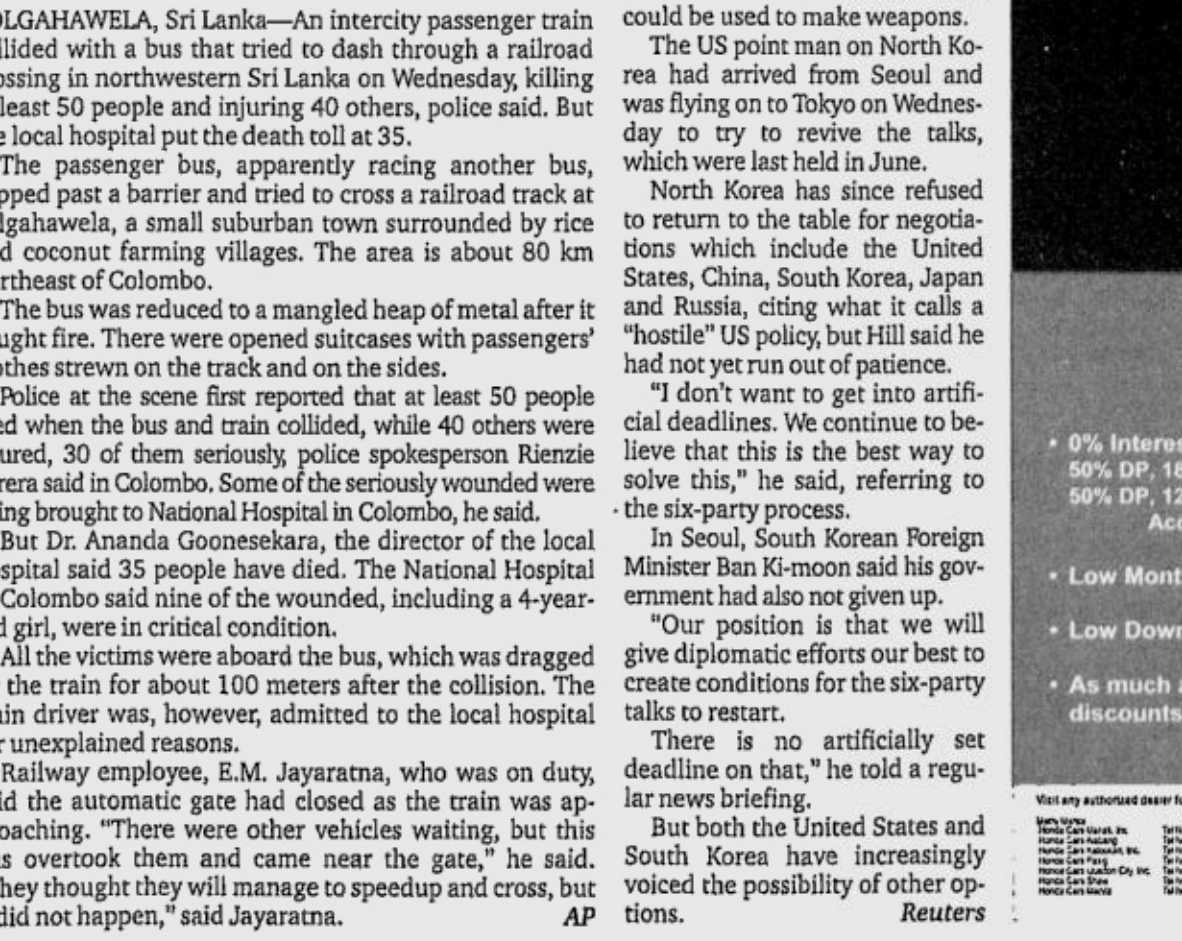
In Seoul, South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon said his government had also not given up.

"Our position is that we will give diplomatic efforts our best to create conditions for the six-party talks to restart.

There is no artificially set deadline on that," he told a regular news briefing.

But both the United States and South Korea have increasingly voiced the possibility of other options. *Reuters*





PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

ISSN 0116-2642

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 20 No. 139

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

Text us your feedback: inquirer opi name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

100% soy ink

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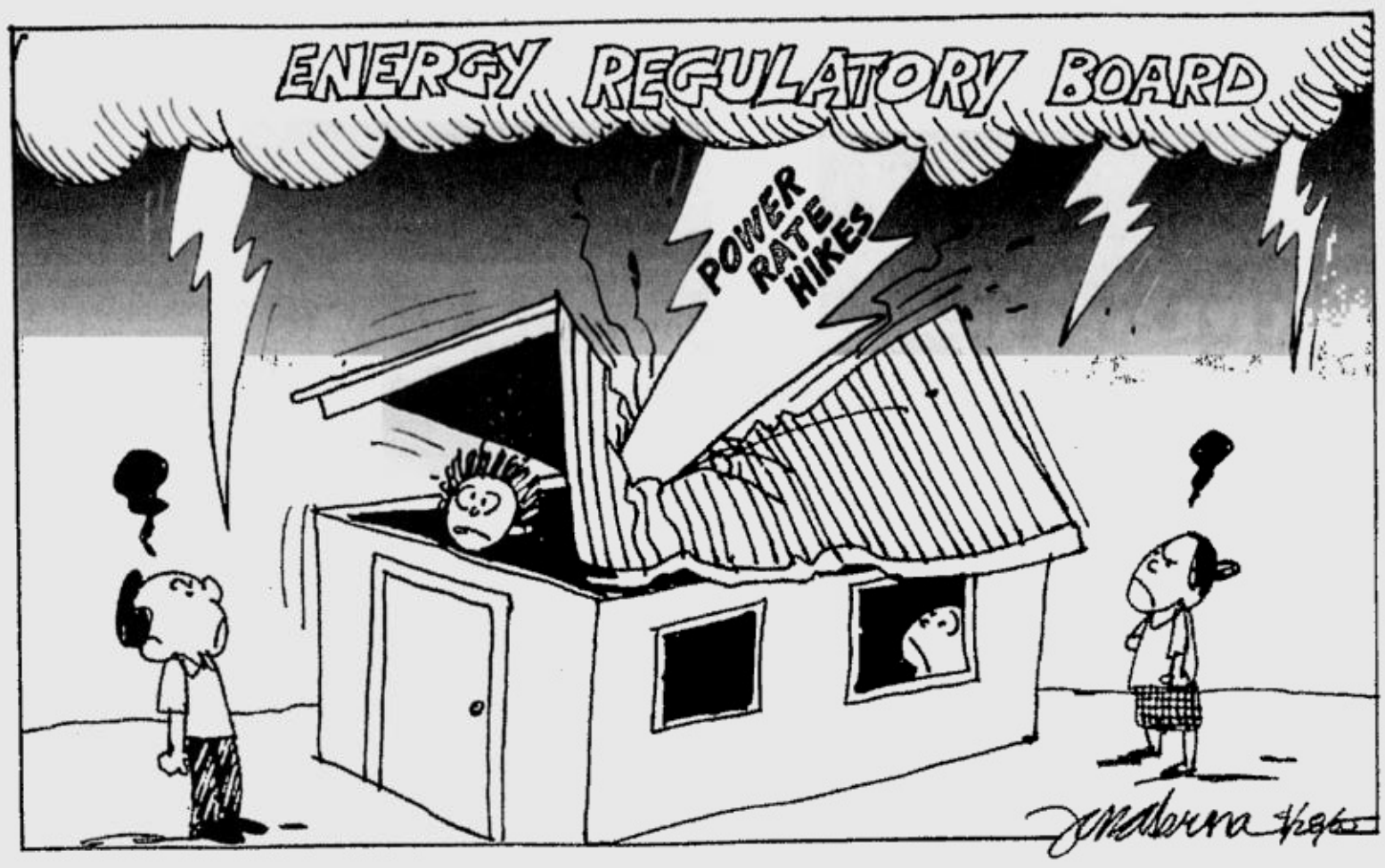

Safe?

EDITORIAL

IT IS bad enough that people are being shot to death in the streets and restaurants or strangled in their homes. What's probably worse is that top police officials see no problem there.

Last April 13, former Pasig Rep. Henry Lanot was shot to death as he was having lunch in a restaurant located along Shaw Boulevard. Early on Sunday, Assistant Foreign Secretary Alicia Ramos was choked to death by masked men who had barged into her house in Palanan, Makati. The next day, Nicolo Echiverri, a doctor and an in-law of Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos, was shot and killed as he was driving to work in Mandaluyong.

All of these well-publicized crimes were committed with a boldness that hinted of the perpetrators' total contempt for the authorities. Lanot and Echiverri were shot in very public places. In the case of the latter, his four assailants even chased him as he drove away, to finish him off. Ramos was killed right inside her bedroom even as the killers left her sister alive after gagging her and tying her up.

Normally, police officials would either hang their heads in shame over the murders of such prominent citizens or bristle with anger that such brazen murders should happen under their watch. Then they would resolve to go after the killers with utmost dispatch.

But some police officials have apparently become so inured to violence that even the assassination and murder of prominent individuals have become ordinary happenings, something over which they should not lose sleep. What gets them worked up instead is any suggestion that they don't measure up to the job. Faced with three sensational murders inside his area of responsibility in a span of two weeks, Director Avelino Razon Jr., chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, told reporters not to blame the police for the crimes. The task of the police is "to prevent, investigate and solve crimes," he said. "We don't make them happen."

Razon is right, of course, although there have been more than one or two dozen instances when members of the Philippine National Police have made crimes happen, like extortion, robbery, holdup, kidnapping, drug trafficking and murder. But as far as preventing, investigating and solving crimes are concerned, we don't know if the record is anything for the PNP to be truly proud of.

In the three recent high-profile cases, for instance, the police obviously failed to prevent the murders, and while they are investigating them, there is no guarantee that they will be solved—just as the murders of scores of journalists and left-leaning activists have remained unsolved.

Razon has been proudly pointing out that the crime rate in Metro Manila went down during the first quarter of the year to 3,777 cases from 4,789 a year earlier. Because of this, he declared that notwithstanding the recent killings, Metro Manila was a "very safe" place.

Razon should try to reason with the relatives of the victims and see how much comfort such statistic provides. If indeed the crime rate has gone down because of higher police visibility or greater police efficiency, the criminals who stalk the streets of the city apparently have not noticed it. They continue to go about their business with the confidence and nonchalance of people who know they will never be caught. Between the cold statistic of a declining crime rate and the hot news of prominent people being killed one after the other, it's easy to tell which affects people more. And they can't be expected to feel safe anywhere in the city. Not especially when the police don't recognize that there is a problem.

A pope to love and fear

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE CATHOLIC Church is relying on a 78-year-old man with the face of a child, a shy person with a great energy and culture. He will be a loved and feared Pope, intellectual but with a shepherd's ways. It never happened that a Pope made his speech to the world 24 hours before his election, during the conclave's opening Mass. In those words addressed to the other cardinals, there is a real pontificate's program, that can be summarized as "Truth and charity."

In the wake of his predecessor, (he will continue) with the humble sweetness of his gestures and with severity. But he will run the Church with great determination and many surprises. He promised a reform of the Church.

Corriere della Sera (Milan, Italy)

Less-traveled highways

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"ALL roads lead to Peking," an ancient Chinese proverb says. The 62-year-old Chinese President Hu Jintao will continue to hammer at that theme on his visit here, in a world dominated by one superpower after communism crumbled.

There are highways other than those to Washington, this hydropower-engineer from Anhui province stressed in earlier stopovers: Brunei, Cuba, Chile and Argentina, among others.

Hu told 42 Asian-African countries meeting in Jakarta: China would work alongside other "countries (to) seize opportunities, strengthen cooperation to cope with challenges in a globalized world and seek common development," Xinhua news agency reports.

So, is the shop exporting Mao-style revolts closed? Rediscovering highways to Beijing has been the consistent pitch offered by Chinese leaders who took over from the "Long March" warriors. As Hu's mentor Deng Hsiao Peng put it: "It's glorious to be rich."

Hu will underscore that motif in his talks with President Macapagal-Arroyo, and in his address to a joint session of Congress. The signing of three business agreements buttresses that pitch.

Size and proximity dictate that West-fixated Filipinos pay more attention to China. Its 1.3 billion population ensures there are 16 Chinese to every Filipino.

China's economy will surge at 8 percent this year. The old Maoists would blink at the consumer splurge on almost everything, from cell phones to cars.

"Let A Hundred Cellphones Bloom," the New York Times headlined its report on the communication surge in a country where commissars once blocked information at whim.

"China leapfrogged the traditional land-line telephone...going directly to mobile phones," the Worldwatch Institute notes. In 1996, some 7 million Chinese hefted cell phones while 44 million Americans did. But a 38-fold explosion saw 269 million cell phones used in 2003. US cell phones quadrupled to 159 million. (Out of every 100,000 Filipinos, 191 had cell phones in 2002, UN's Human Development Report notes.)

China's consumption of grain and meat, coal and steel has already eclipsed that of the United States, says the Earth Policy Institute's Lester Brown. US oil consumption is triple that of China. But US oil use expanded by only 15 percent while that of China doubled.

China uses 800 million tons of coal yearly. Soon, it will be the world's top emitter of carbon. "The world then may have two major climate disrupters: China and the US."

China's per capita income of $4,880, of course, lags behind the United States' $35,750. But China has already overtaken the Philippines which, given its continuing *fiestas*, has only a per capita income of $4,710.

Massive imports put China at the world raw materials economy's center. Beijing's highways link with resource-rich countries as Brazil, Kazakhstan, Russia, Indonesia and Australia. They're built on long-term supply contracts. That shapes Beijing's foreign policy.

"China is an emerging economic superpower," adds Brown. "If the last century was the American century, this one looks to be the Chinese century."

Maybe. That depends on how Hu and today's leaders tackle China's equally massive problems.

Poverty is one. Shattering of the "iron rice bowl" subsidies by the communist regime has also seen over 200 million idled in rural areas. How long can China cash in on the artificial rate of its currency? Can it rein in spendthrift local governments? More important, can it staunch the steady loss of communist party membership?

"China's economic transformation has not yet threatened the supremacy of the Communist Party," notes Foreign Affairs. "But the political situation cannot be assumed to be static."

It remains an authoritarian regime. The hurried burial, sans honor, of the liberal premier Zhao Zhiyang, who was sacked for sympathizing with student demonstrators at Tiananmen Square, underscores this. Muslims in the border areas are harassed. And Catholics are cut off from open communion with the Vatican.

Economic change can quickly trigger off waves of political change, as generations pass. All Politburo members today hold university degrees—a far cry from the generation of Mao and the Long March survivors. China communists today might soon "look more like Mexico's International Revolutionary Party than the rigid totalitarian party that it was," former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger once said.

The Philippines must adopt to these new realities, not merely by shifting from *jueteng* to *mahjong*. Southeast Asian countries must either weed out corruption and build stronger internal ties, or risk a pattern of periodic chaos.

"China will not pay for Southeast Asia's lunch," the Financial Times' Joe Studwell has written. "Southeast Asia's future lies very much in its own hands."

* * *

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Miracle

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NOBODY really knows why they prefer to congregate in the waters off Donsol, but they do. These are the whale sharks, called *butanding* in Sorsogon, Bicol, which are really not whales but sharks. Sharks that like to feed only on plankton and not—as "Jaws" has stoked in the popular imagination—on the higher, more evolved (though that is not always apparent) members of the food chain. That must take a whole lot of plankton, which the sea in Donsol probably contains. The *butandings* weigh 20 tons and, by comparison in size, reduce humans to puny playthings of the universe. They have been called "gentle giants, and richly deserve each word.

There are less than a hundred of them gliding in the deep in Donsol, and it's this time of year that they show themselves in their awe-inspiring splendor to the curious. We saw four of them in the course of coasting along the sea on a boat for a couple of hours. We were assured the more glorious experience would be to behold them underwater with aid of snorkel and fin—you swim alongside them, taking care to observe a reasonable distance while observing them—but none of us was of the intrepid or athletic type. We contented ourselves with beholding them above water, while they slid into the surface or near it, and I can swear, even with my limited exposure to the wonders of Nature, that there was still a world to behold.

They first appear as a dark mass just below water, which does not escape the eagle eyes of spotters who accompany each boat. The dark mass gets darker as you go near them, and the white spots on their backs, which are their defining feature, glisten in the sun. They are one of the oldest creatures on earth, and you are seized with the thought—as you watch them heave through the water with profound indifference to time and space—that you are standing on the threshold of Creation. Well, standing on the threshold of Creation for a couple of hours left us also with fierce sunburns. But it was worth it, and happily sunburn was something time easily cured.

Donsol has every reason to be jealous of the *butandings*. The place has repeatedly been described in media stories as "a sleepy town," as its new mayor Salve Ocaya says, and it has lived up to its reputation. It is a fourth-class municipality, and, like its more famous non-human residents, has seemed impervious to the passage of time for a long time. It has been roused to wakefulness only by the sudden and ferocious interest of the outside world to its aquatic guests. The rousing has been a little rude: the town hasn't quite prepared for an influx of visitors, as its road to shore shows, largely a rough path relieved by bursts of concrete which are traversed only in one direction at any given time. It's the timeless *butandings* that have given Donsol a crack at catching up with time.

The local government isn't looking the gift horse, or gift fish, in the mouth. It's a blessing it has been grateful for, and has shown it by its efforts to preserve it and make it grow. Recently, the town was accused by a group of people who descended on its waters to view the *butandings* of claiming proprietary rights to them. Their accusation stemmed from the fact that the officials patrolling the waters apprised them of the need to register first with the Donsol clearing office. The guests refused, saying they had a right to be there, they did not need permission from anyone to see the *butandings*.

The Donsol authorities replied that they are not there to make life difficult for anyone, they are there to protect their human visitors as much as their non-human ones. An orientation video in their office, produced with help from experts, shows why. The *butandings* may be gentle giants, but they are still sharks whose domain needs to be respected. Divers are advised never to swim in front of them, only several meters alongside and behind them. They are advised as well not to use flash or impede the movement of the creatures. At the very least, what would happen if the *butandings* were aggressively intruded upon was that they would seek haven elsewhere. At the very most, it might alter their behavior. There are limits to gentleness in the face of vexation, for man or beast. Either way, Donsol would end up losing God's greatest gift to them.

The interest shown by the outside world, notably the scientific community, to the *butandings* is easy to see. The *butandings* have a lifespan of over a hundred years but they spawn only every 25 years and produce only a couple of offspring each time. Humans, not least in the area, could do with following their example, at least as far as the number of offspring goes, if not the interval of multiplying. Thankfully, the female outnumber the male in the current population of less than a hundred *butandings* in Donsol. Donsol has every reason to guard its treasure well. It isn't just a boon to the community, it is a boon to the planet itself.

A couple of Japanese who emerged from the water in scuba gear were deeply appreciative of the experience of swimming with the giant creatures. The one who spoke English well told me. "We learned about them from an aquatic expert friend in Japan. So we came. We won't see them anywhere else. They are (he groped for words to describe what he saw) a miracle!"

We spoke about other things while the breezes blew and some people there prepared their sailboats to race against each other, and while we ate viands drenched in *gata* with bowlfuls of rice. My Japanese friend reflected: "I don't know why you people envy us and want to come to Japan. I live in Tokyo, and I probably earn ten times more than you. But I probably earn ten times more than you. But I don't think my life is better. I just have a fast life, you have—this."

I agreed. But that is another column, or miracle.

Palace needs to use persuasion 'to the hilt'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN A RECENT chat with Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan about the lack of progress on the VAT bill in the Senate and President Macapagal-Arroyo's appeal to pass it, he told me that GMA asked for an additional P50 billion on top of her original request. The total amount now being sought is P130 billion. If this is the case, Pangilinan said, "then all the persuasive powers of the presidency must now be mobilized to the hilt" on the senators.

Pangilinan said his colleagues are convinced they have to pass the VAT bill, but whether it will be 10 percent with almost all exemptions lifted, or 12 percent with few exemptions, or a compromise 11 percent, remains the bone of contention (a 2-percent increase will yield P28 billion more). The bicameral conference committee sessions have been suspended due to disagreements between the two panels. From what I hear, it's far tougher to agree on lifting the exemption currently being enjoyed by the independent power producers than that enjoyed by the oil companies (lifting both would yield P34 billion). "*Mas madugo ang* power," Pangilinan said.

At this point, it remains unclear what will come out of the bicam committee. But definitely more than just clarity is needed from the Palace. I suspect that if GMA were to appeal personally to, say, Sen. Manny Villar, he would give way; and so would Sen. Joker Arroyo. The talk in the Senate is that even Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the ways and means committee that's sponsoring the VAT bill, is also seeking guidance.

* * *

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, in statements to the media, stressed that the proposed hybrid coconut experimental station/development community in Agusan Valley, reportedly to be funded by coconut levy funds, is still in the exploratory stage. Yap said the memorandum of understanding signed last September between the Philippine Coconut Authority and several levy-funded institutions was precisely to conduct feasibility studies. This is reassuring. But because the project is still in the exploratory stage, certain things must be clarified.

* * *

It should be stressed that the concept of an experimental hybrid coconut station is very sound. Ferdinand Marcos, 30 years ago, saw the need for a "nationwide coconut replanting program" and issued in 1981 PD 1768, identifying Agusan Valley as a site. Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco tried putting it up on Bugsuk island with a billion-peso funding (huge money some 28 years ago) from the coco levy and seedlings supplied by his own firm. Nothing came of it. In an interview Cecile Alvarez and I had with former PCA Administrator Danilo Coronacion in our dzRH program six months ago, he stressed that the Philippines was losing its primacy in coconut production to Indonesia. He said Indonesia had about 320 million trees while RP only had about 3 million, many of them old.

* * *

It would seem that the needs of the country would be served far better if coconut breeding stations were set up in various areas around the country, and not just one province, such as what Marcos' PD wanted to do in Agusan Valley. I note, too, that there are conflicts about the suitability of Agusan Valley to coconut planting. Resigned PCA chief Evangeline Valbuena, former Agriculture Secretary Carlos Dominguez and some farmers' groups say the area is most unsuitable, while other groups swear it is. If P8.4 billion of the coco levy funds is going to be sunk into this project, coconuts had better thrive there. But the basic questions, as stressed in the Senate hearing earlier this week, are whether the levy funds could be used for such a project, and why they're being proposed by entities which apparently have no authority to do so, such as the CIIF and CocoFinance.

* * *

Earlier I wrote of the "sign" Gina de Venecia sought so she would know that her 16-year-old daughter KC, who perished in a fire in their home last Dec. 16, was at peace with the Lord. Mandaluyong Rep. Ben-Hur Abalos had the same problem with the recent sudden demise of his 19-year-old daughter Ciara from a deadly viral infection. At her wake, Ben-Hur tearfully told friends that as he composed her obituary, he was filled with a lot of bitterness toward God, questioning Him why Ciara had to die in such a terrible manner. He admitted that his faith was being shaken, and that he was concerned about where she was and whether she was happy—"the when, where and why of it."

* * *

Then an incredible thing happened. As Ciara lay in the ICU last Friday, probably already clinically dead, a close friend called Ben-Hur and to his surprise the congressman's ring tone was a bar from Jose Mari Chan's "Christmas in My Heart." That weekend, a number of friends and relatives also noted that it was rather weird that Ben-Hur would still be using a Christmas song at this time. Apparently he was not aware of it until his sister Girlie made him listen to it. He got goose pimples as he quickly realized that he, his wife Menchi and their twin daughters, Ciara and Charisse, had been singing the song since the kids were small! "It was our song," he said.

* * *

Ben-Hur checked with Globe and he was told the ring tone couldn't have been programmed into his phone by anyone other than himself. But he hadn't so. As per Globe's records, the first call with this tone came at 10:02 p.m. last Friday. Ciara expired at 10 p.m. Later a text message came into his phone informing him that the ring tone would expire in five days. The fifth day was yesterday, the day Ciara was buried.

Ben-Hur mused that this was her way of telling him to hang on to his faith. A line from the song goes, "This season, may we never forget the love we have for Jesus. May he always guide us." Now, more than ever, he said, "I know there is life after death, and that there is a God."

My worst fear

YOUNG BLOOD

Meryll Peña Arcos

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

LAST Dec. 16, I stood face to face with my greatest fear. We were having our school's outreach activity in Barangay Tinago, Legazpi City, and there I met Joseph. He was a skinny little boy, wearing a tattered shirt and not even slippers.

I didn't want to look at his face, but I had no choice. He was there right in front of me, and looking deep into his sorrowful eyes was unavoidable. His eyes, if he were happy, would have been more beautiful. But that day, happiness, just like I was, seemed to be a stranger to Joseph. His eyes told me he was young and innocent, largely unaware of the world around him. He had a lot of questions in his mind and he had to find the answers. His eyes seemed to tell me that he was so weak and he needed me to protect him.

I looked at his perfectly shaped nose and told myself he was handsome. Why was he not born earlier? I asked myself. The naughty thought of how perfectly handsome an older Joseph would be played in my mind. He would have made an ideal boyfriend!

I looked at his lips and his mouth. He seemed so hungry, so desperate to have the candies I was holding in my hand. As he opened his mouth to beg for some candies, I caught a glimpse of his tongue. It seemed to have been craving so long for candies. I wondered how hard it was to beg and to crave for something that couldn't be yours. I wondered what it was in the candies that he wanted? They didn't even taste good to me.

The taste. It was the taste that Joseph wanted. The taste he imagined but never experienced.

I looked down to his thin chest and then to his flat stomach. His collarbone, shoulders and his ribs were showing and I could almost see the perfect frame of his skeletal system. He was hungry. I could tell that for some time now, Joseph had been fighting the pain of an empty stomach.

I felt a sudden twist in mine. I was 19 and I had never felt such hunger in my life. And here was Joseph, an 8-year-old boy who seemed to have been hungry all his life.

I looked further down to his legs, then to his bare feet. They were so dirty. They looked as if they had carried him far already. They seemed to have traveled a lot and hurt so many times.

I looked down at my own feet, and noticed that they were clean and protected.

I gave him the candies he was begging for. I felt the touch of his skin. His hands didn't feel like those of an 8-year-old boy. They were so hard, so rough. His hands were proof that at a very young age, he had started working to survive.

I felt tears welling in my eyes. I hoped Joseph would think that I was teary-eyed because I was overjoyed to see him. I hoped he would not notice that I pitied and feared him. All my life, I had been struggling hard not to fall into a pit that would condemn me to a life like his.

Joseph is the reason I study hard. Joseph is the reason I need to become rich. Joseph is the perfect image of the boy that I wouldn't want and dread that my children might turn out to be.

I stood face to face with Joseph. The perfect image of failure in my future.

I am a sophomore now trying hard to fight off the temptations that might hinder me from achieving my dreams. I still see Joseph on the road every day. I still fear him. I still pity him. But more than that, I am inspired by him.

Meryll Peña Arcos, 19, is a sophomore Journalism student of Bicol University.

'Ein papst aus Deutschland'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

I KEPT switching to Deutsche Welle (DW), the German channel on cable TV, right after Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected pope last week. What was it like for the Germans, the predominantly Catholic Bavarians especially, to have one of them become Papst Benedikt XVI? The crawler on the TV screen said, *"Ein papst aus Deutschland"* (The pope from Germany).

DW had first crack at the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker, so to speak, in Ratzinger's home town in Bavaria, Germany. Now, cookies and bread are being named after him.

DW was game enough to show tabloids with screaming headlines saying "Papa Ratzi," "German Shepherd," "God's Rottweiler" and something about the Hitlerjungen to which Ratzinger was conscripted in his youth.

I've been to Germany a couple of times. Both were journalism-related trips and the second one took us through the so-called "Romantic Route" and the "Fairy Tale Route" that featured castles, places in the Brothers Grimm's fairy tales and even a torture museum. A must-see was the castle of the tragic Bavarian king Ludwig, after which the Disneyland logo was modeled.

Bavarians are supposed to be warmer in disposition compared with Germans from the north. Several of my mentors in college were German Benedictine nuns who hailed mostly from Bavaria. I can still name some of them: Sr. Odiliana Rohrwasser (Trigo, Algebra, Physical Science, Theology II), who is now in Baguio; Sr. Ehrentrudis Eichinger (Psychology, Theology III); Sr. Ma. Bruno Allmang (Logic, Cosmology and Ontology, Art Appreciation) who is back at their motherhouse near Lake Stanberg in Bavaria. The librarian was Sr. Ma. Clemens Schwarzmaier. It was boot camp with a smile.

They always spoke in English so we never learned German. The famous *"Ich bin ein Berliner"* I learned from JFK.

Shock, joy, acceptance. These were some reactions I solicited in the aftermath of Ratzinger's election.

"When I heard his name mentioned, my heart sank," said American Maryknoll sister and theology professor Helen Graham the morning after the announcement was made. She'd had little sleep since the news broke the night before, she confided. But, perhaps to console herself and those who felt the same say, Graham reminded: "Ratzinger's role in the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith differed from this new role as pope which is to focus on unity."

Ratzinger was the late Pope John Paul II's enforcer of orthodoxy, the one who cracked the whip in doctrinal matters. He authored the "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and the World" which was hugely criticized by women's rights advocates. Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel's maiden speech in Congress last year was a stinging criticism of Ratzinger's letter.

Graham was not entirely distraught. "I have some hope that this new role would take him in new directions. Now he has a different agenda, a different job, which is to be a symbol of unity."

Interviewed by the INQUIRER just before the conclave, Graham had said she "was saddened by the opposition to even discussing the issue of women's ordination, the stifling of imaginative theological thinking and the inability to make any change whatsoever in reproductive issues that profoundly affect the lives of women."

Graham is a proponent of the use of inclusive language in the liturgy.

I noticed that John Paul II's funeral and Benedict XVI's installation liturgies were grandly, hugely, almost entirely all-male. Even the choir was all-boys.

"I was very happy," Bishop Rolando Tria-Tirona of the recently devastated Prelature of Infanta told the INQUIRER. "I hope to see him put back moral, spiritual and pastoral sense in Western Europe where the Church is dwindling. There has been too much relativism, a kind of wishy-washiness there."

In his homily before the conclave, Ratzinger had warned about relativism. Tirona added that the new Pope might leave his old public persona behind. "When you are in another position you will shed your old role. You have greater perspective."

Tirona, head of the Episcopal Commission on the Youth, will soon meet Pope Benedict XVI at the World Youth Day gathering in Cologne, Germany. They have met briefly in the past and Tirona was impressed by Ratzinger's aura of humility.

And what does Sr. Mary John Mananzan, Germany-educated prioress of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters in the Philippines, known feminist and women's rights advocate here and abroad, founder of the Women's Institute of St. Scholastica's College and one of the driving spirits behind the Ecumenical Association of Third World Women Theologians, have to say? "The only thing I want to say is: I believe in the Holy Spirit more than I believe in my human judgment. That is why I am accepting (Pope Benedict XVI) in faith. *Wala na akong idadagdag pa* (I have nothing more to add)."

Interviewed some years ago on Bavarian TV, Ratzinger was asked if he really believed the Holy Spirit plays a role in the election of the pope. His answer: "I would not say so in the sense that the Holy Spirit picks out the pope, because there are too many contrary instances of popes the Holy Spirit would obviously not have picked. I would say that the Spirit does not exactly take control of the affair, but rather like a good educator, as it were, leaves us much space, much freedom, without entirely abandoning us. Thus the Spirit's role should be understood in a much more elastic sense, not that he dictates the candidate for whom one must vote. Probably the only assurance he offers is that the thing cannot be totally ruined."

I agree. Only I refer to the Holy Spirit as a she.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

A reader's rejoinder

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

(I am reproducing a letter from Aida Rivera Ford of Davao in response to my Christmas column. While I never mentioned names, she feels she needs to give her side of the story.)

YOUR grandfather, President Manoling Quezon, has a special niche in our Rivera Museum at the Ford Academy of the Arts in Davao City because he sustained the studies of a Bataan barrio boy, my father Pablo S. Rivera, who served as his social secretary in Washington, D.C. from 1915 to 1918. The museum also features my brother Estanislao Rivera whom the INQUIRER honored with a front-page story on April 10, 1999 as an Ateneo war hero. It also features my sister Lydia's talented family. And of course, our mother Lourdes Consunji Rivera who pioneered in Davao farming and administered the Rivera state, planted abaca and planted ramie and lost because the government reneged on its commitment to provide a market for it. After Papa's death in 1955, Mama single-handedly tackled the huge RFC debt....

You can imagine my shock when I slowly realized that the family in your "A Christmas Story" was ours. (We stayed during the war years in Bacolod, not Iloilo as you stated.) A nurse-friend who attended to my mother after she stopped farming at the age of 83 because of spinal paralysis (she lived to be 99) called me up in horror: "Have you read the INQUIRER article? Why, your sister hardly ever visited your mother!" Her famous surgeon-husband amputated both of my mother's legs in the 1990s and while my aunt, UE dean emeritus Socorro Esperitu, came for the operation, my own sister could only send a telegram [expressing her] regrets since she had to attend to farm matters in Catigan.

I had actually been on Cloud 9 since the NVM Gonzalez Foundation honored me on Nov. 27 for my contributions to Philippine literature and Mindanao culture. What a bang I am experiencing now with this assault on my integrity.

If you will notice, my sister never once mentioned our mother from whom she owes almost everything, including her Ecoland home and a quarter-grand piano. Mama had always been on wheels administering even my 20-hectare land—now the Riverford Nature Park—that I bought from a Bagobo-Japanese mestizo in 1960. It was Mama also who decided to sell our Tuban property because of an NPA problem, but only Mama and I bore the expenses for the sale. Lydia certainly got the major share although she never had a hand in the hard work. (At Mama's bidding, I would drive a little jeep through flood waters to supervise copra-making but the checks always went to Mama's separate bank account.) Lydia was always treated as the "niña bonita."

How I could possibly withhold from her our father's legacy is beyond my ken. Her insinuations that I have manipulated court matters is most insulting to me and the judges concerned. As a matter of fact, when she was seeking the turnover of "advanced inheritance" which with Mama's consent had been retitled into Ingle Trust Foundation, she complained to the Supreme Court that this judge was biased in my favor because she kept setting conferences for an amicable settlement. A hurried decision was made where the former share-and-share-alike title was ruled to be ¼ for Ingle Trust Foundation and ¼ only for me! Of course, I have appealed this decision.

After distancing her family from us in 1978, she finally came to Mama's 80th birthday. She rebuffed Mama's open arms by saying, "I did not come for a social visit but to tell you that unless you go to my lawyer on such a date, I will sue you!" As she exited, Mama never said a word. But on the appointed time, a sudden thunderstorm broke. Mama looked up to heaven and interpreted this as a sign that she should not go to see Lydia's lawyer. A week or so later, we all met with her lawyer at the office of Mama's lawyer where we pledged to help her avoid foreclosure on her Ecoland property. However, when the first building of the Learning Center of the Arts (now the Ford Academy of the Arts) was completed, she filed a case against me, claiming that the funds all came from Mama. The case reached the Supreme Court which fined her P130,000 plus lawyer's fees for "moral and exemplary damages."

In 1996, after she forcibly took over the produce from "advanced inheritance," I bought three small parcels of land from Mama so that she could have money for her hospital and medical needs. After Mama died in 1999, Lydia filed a million-peso damage suit against me and sought the nullification of all titles. Some kind friends interceded and asked the judge that we undergo mediation. I conceded to her half of 3.7 hectares plus a right of way through my half. After two years, she still refused to develop the road right of way and would go through my 9.99 hectares. I finally filed my first case against her for "malicious mischief and intrusion." I could have filed a case against her and her "mayordomo" for qualified theft for selling copra from 28 of my coconut trees but I didn't.

This evil genius of a "mayordomo" served as Mama's driver for many years. She gifted him with 2,400 square meters of residential land and when he resigned to enter Lydia's employ, she gave him a jeep which was actually in her will. I allowed him to haul stored lumber with which he built a cottage in Lydia's Ecoland property. He and his wife are examples of "sipsipidity." They all deserve each other...

Also that "mayordomo" introduced another innovation: planting 3 coconut trees in one spot. Perhaps this has something to do with environmental farming.

Do not worry—everything I have mentioned is documented... The question is, how will your Grimm Fairy Tale with me as villainess end?

Magic and madness

Annah Karina Polina

HE used to be a real Thriller, wowing millions of fans worldwide. Now, as millions watch the progress of the child molestation case against him, he seems to be Bad and more Dangerous than ever.

Whatever happened to Michael Jackson? What became of the former child wonder, the total performer, the ultimate hit-maker? Everywhere I turn, there are just two images being projected by the media: Michael the Pedophile and, of course, Forever Wacko Jacko.

I was 10 when I first learned to admire the "King of Pop." I thought it was just a phase. But 12 years later, I remain devoted. I suppose it wasn't just his talent that got me hooked. It was his total personality, his overall kookiness and glamour.

Unfortunately for me, it was also in 1993 when allegations about child molestation first surfaced. That was the start of his downfall. I felt bad. Just as I was beginning to like him, he was disintegrating right before my eyes.

Had I been born earlier, I could have seen him enjoying uninterrupted fame during the late 1970s and the greater part of the 1980s. But even then, he was already weird, or shall I say eccentric. (I was told that famous people with unusual behavior should not be called weird; they are eccentric.) But he seemed harmless. So what if he bleached his skin? So what if he turned his sprawling estate into a mini-Disneyland? If you wanted outrageous gossip, there's almost always one about Michael. But he was tolerated because his talent was bigger. He was a phenomenon, the biggest-selling artist of all time.

J.D. Salinger once wrote of "artists, who as well as having a reputation for producing great works have something garishly wrong with them as persons: a spectacular flaw in character." I doubt if people will feel the same way again about Michael. Can his talent salvage his reputation? The way things are going, I'm afraid this is the end for him. There is no going back ever again. He wasn't convicted the first time, but it left a big, nasty stain on his once illustrious career. Although he tried hard, his star never shone as brightly as it once did.

Now I'm going through the same ordeal I went through more than a decade ago. And this time I don't see any possibility of vindication. This case against him is strong. I'll just have to endure my friends' teases, the negative remarks from the press and the ugly jokes. But in the end, it won't really matter to me if he's proven guilty or not. That will be his problem, not mine. A conviction would, of course, cause so much grief to his remaining fans. But I have long prepared for that moment. Honestly, it would hurt me, but it won't stop me from admiring him.

I choose to remain a fan for life. The posters will stay where they are. I'll keep on listening to his songs and watching his videos with the same excitement as before. He will remain the same Michael Jackson I first came to love, the Michael I would want to remember forever. The Moonwalker. The versatile singer. My very own "Kooky Monster" in sparkling vests. I will always remember what I wanted from him when I was small: Magic and Madness.

Annah Karina Polina, 22, is a BS Industrial Engineering student at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

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MY sister Rhodora and I went to the United States on the invitation of another sister, Rosanna and husband, Law Pifer who own a store there.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

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The FDC calls for an end to this hypocrisy and non-action on the part of the government. Payment of the BNPP loans must be stopped immediately.

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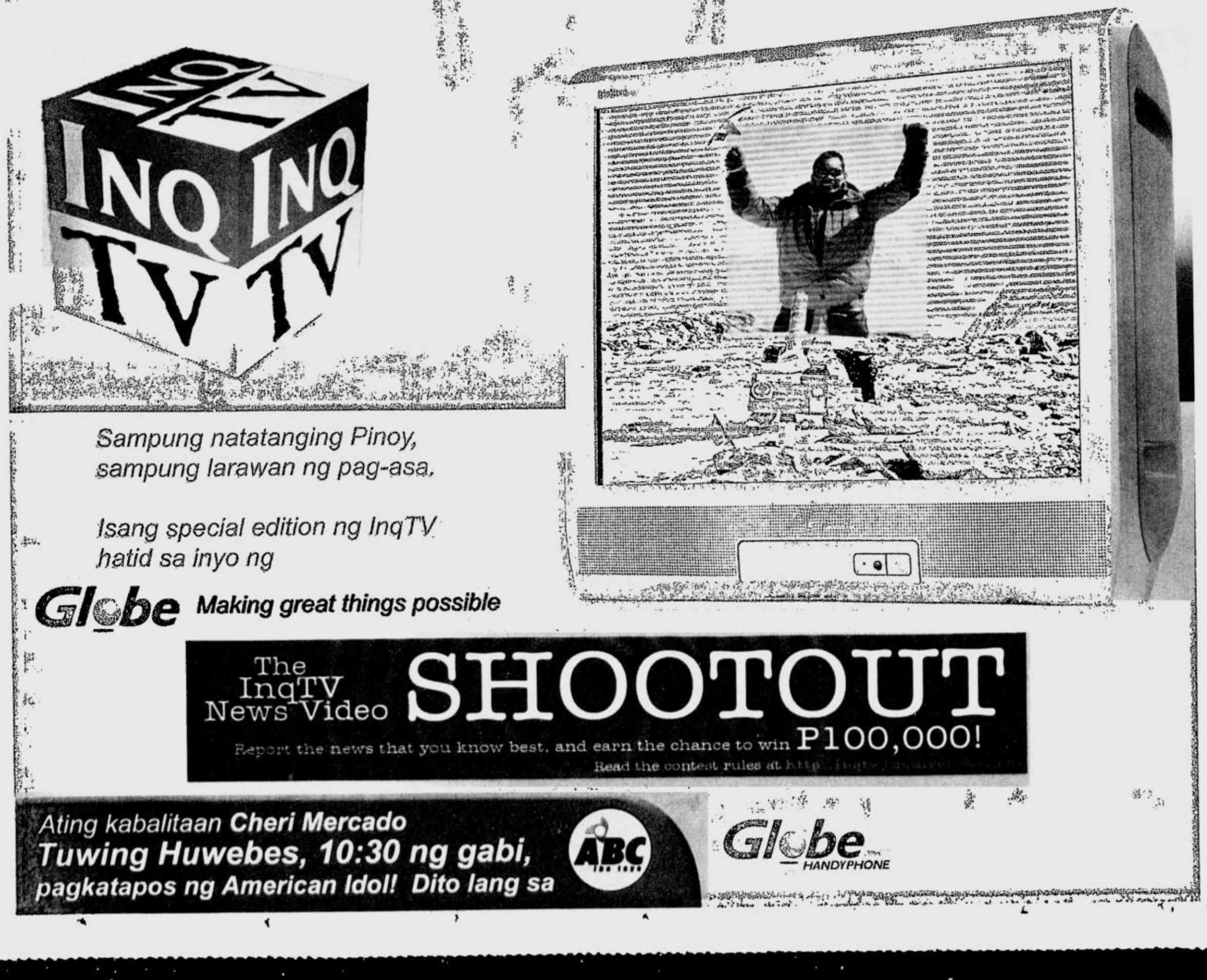

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Tuwing Huwebes, 10:30 ng gabi,
pagkatapos ng American Idol! Dito lang sa ABC

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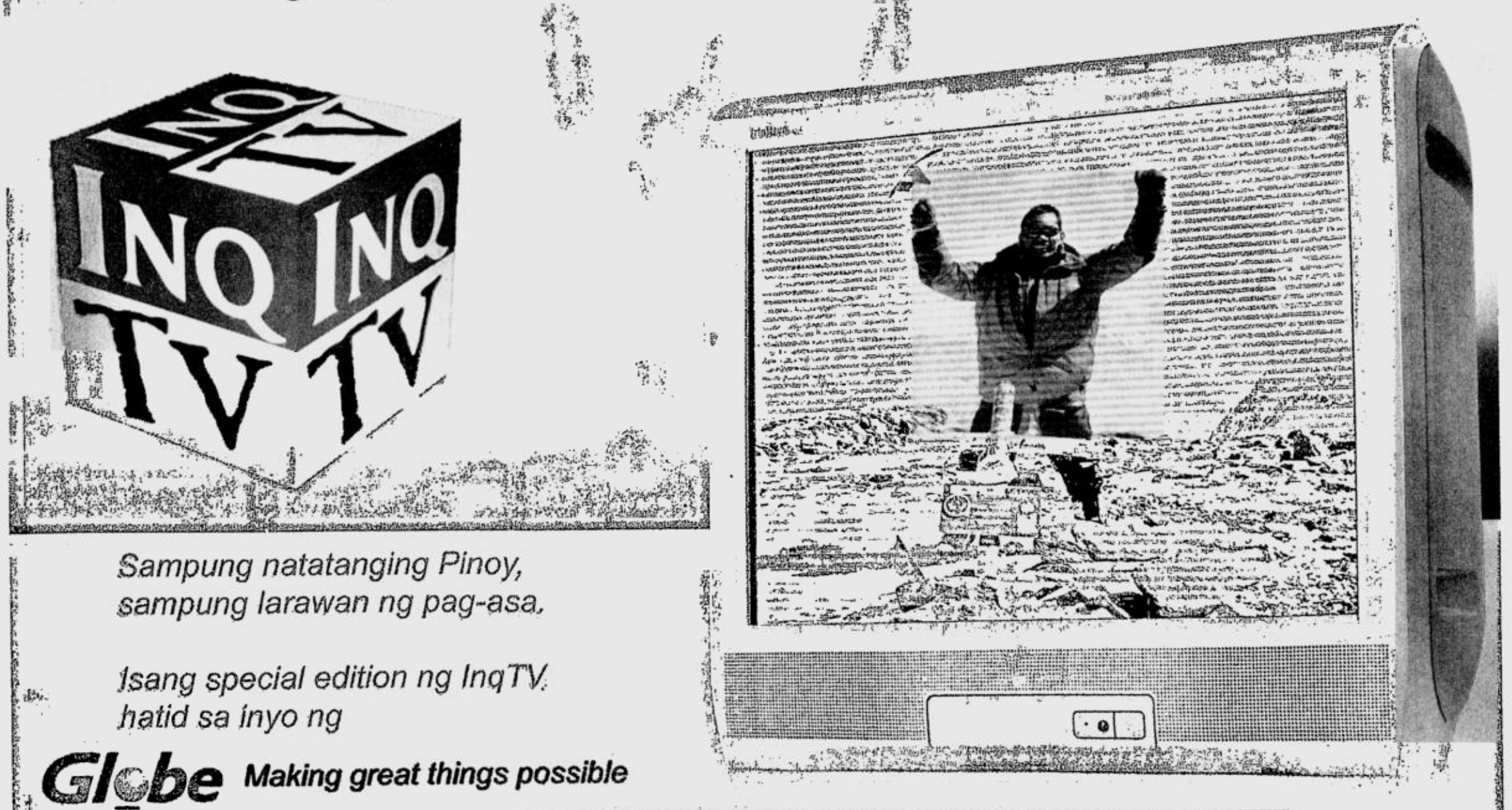
Aba, that's inqredible! Part 2
Kuwento ng mga kakaibang Pinoy



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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
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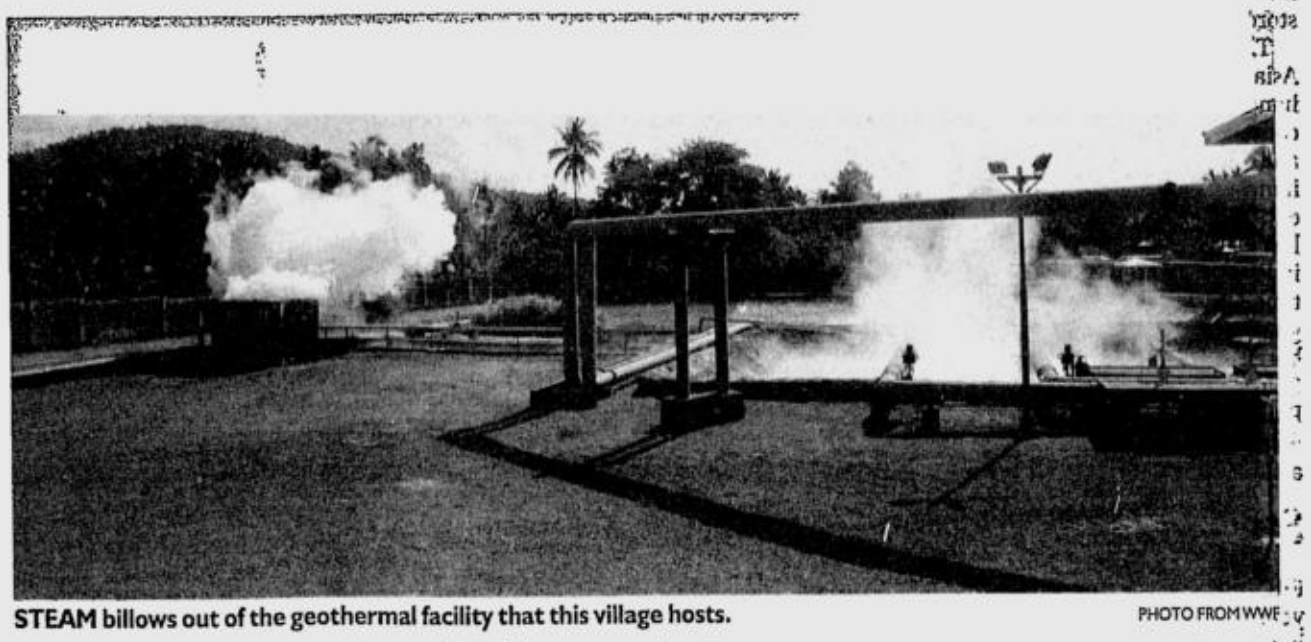
Village hosts power amid its darkness

'Our community supplies electricity to Metro Manila, but we could not even light a single bulb at night?'



STEAM billows out of the geothermal facility that this village hosts. PHOTO FROM WWF

By Marlon Ramos
Bay, Laguna

INSIDE a small, cramped classroom of the Bitin National High School (BNHS) in Bay, Laguna, 16-year-old Michelle Ladia patiently answered every question listed on the test booklet of the National Achievement Test.

She was one of the school's 121 graduating students who took the mandatory pre-collegiate examination on March 14.

Although she and her classmates had at least three months to review, Ladia said they were worried at the result of the exams.

"We couldn't review at night, only at daytime. But it was humid in school, sir," she said after the exams.

Carmen Romeroso, the principal, was just as anxious. She said the school officials were concerned that their 70-percent passing average in the past three years would go down.

In the adjacent Bitin Elementary School, Grade 3 pupils Patrick Clark Fajardo and Julian Nillera whined that they could not concentrate on what they were doing because of the blistering temperature inside their 20-square-meter classroom.

Their teacher, Teresita Marqueses, said she couldn't do anything for the students who had to endure the scorching summer heat.

"We have four electric fans but we cannot use them," she said.

The source of the villagers' anxiety was easy to see.

The upland barangay of Bitin was plunged into darkness after the government-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) and the Transmission Corp. (Transco) decided to cut electric supply to the village on Feb. 28.

The community of about 4,000 people hosts the 410-megawatt Makiling-Banahaw (Mak-Ban) Geothermal Power Plant Complex (MBGPPC) that supplies about 70 percent of power to the Luzon grid.

Power cut

The residents could not believe that they would suffer the fate of remote villages in other parts of the country. For almost 28 years, they had free electricity.

"Isn't it ironic that while our community supplies electricity for Metro Manila, residents could not even light a single bulb at night?" lamented teacher Lusita Lopez.

Their problem worsened when their water supply, which relies on electricity-run pumps, was cut off.

But while the whole community suffers, their barangay chair, Alberto Navarette, enjoys continuous supply of free electricity, offered by a local power subcontractor even before the disconnection.

When Transco technicians arrived to permanently shut down the source of power for Bitin on Feb. 28, members of the community staged a rally and tried to barricade the whole complex.

A violent confrontation between the protesters and the facility's security guards was averted after Mayor Bruno Ramos and Navarette interceded.

Angry residents accused Ramos and Navarette of taking sides with the Napocor and Transco, saying the officials prohibited them from airing their grievances during the forum.

Navarette said he did so to prevent trouble from escalating, while Ramos said they feared that barricading the complex would impede plant operations and affect Metro Manila's power supply.

The residents also claimed that the Napocor had entered into an agreement with the original settlers for free electricity in exchange for the damage the plant would cause the community.

Project

Virgilio Navarro, plant manager, who started working in the facility as an engineer in 1979, said there "was never an agreement for us to supply free electricity to the barangay."

But he said Napocor engineers "promised to provide electricity to the community if they allowed the company to use their land to develop the plant."

"They took it in the wrong context. They thought the free electricity was for life," he said.

He said the decision to disconnect the electric supply actually came from Transco.

Through the years, Navarro said they had consistently reminded the barangay officials about the impending power cut and that the decision was never done in haste, he said.

In the early 1980s, Napocor officials started asking the residents to remove the illegal connections from their facility.

In October last year, Navarro said they started talking with community members, informing them that they would upgrade the fa-

VILLAGE/ A19

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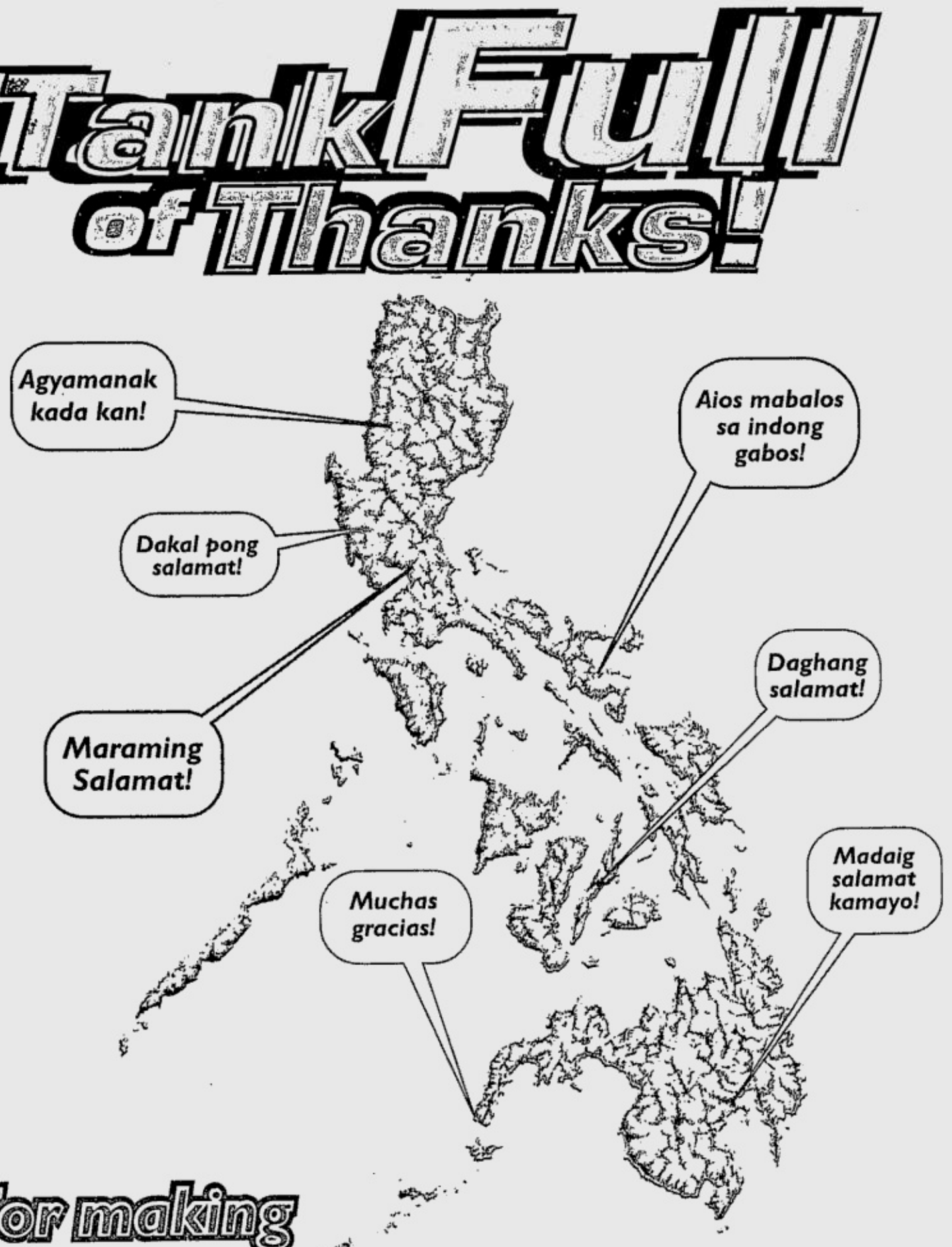

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OFWs cash cow for RP economy, says World Bank

From page A1

demand and agriculture output declined in the wake of a typhoon late last year.

Official data for the first quarter of 2005 is not yet available.

In a twice-yearly report on East Asian economies, the WB said the Philippines' financial markets had largely stabilized after political uncertainty that roiled equity and bond prices and the peso in early 2004.

The peso, which was under pressure until after the May 2004 national elections, rebounded to 12-month highs against the US dollar in early 2005, the bank said.

The stock market rose 26 percent in 2004 and hit a five-year high in early 2005.

The WB said the government had kept its deficit below target in the first quarter of 2005, with spending well contained.

Export growth rose 9 percent in nominal terms in 2004, with an approximate 45 percent increase in exports to China giving the Philippines a cushion against energy prices and other pressures, said the bank.

"Coupled with strong growth in remittances and tourism, the increase in higher priced oil imports was borne relatively smoothly, with the current account surplus easing only slightly," it said.

Still, the bank warned that inflation was a worry.

"With core inflation increasing ... the risk that higher generalized inflation could take hold has been rising," the bank said.

The Department of Labor and Employment said yesterday the numbers of Filipinos who were deployed to work overseas rose to 270,356 in the first three months of 2005, an increase over the 269,271 deployed in the same period last year.

This amounted to about 2,846 Filipinos leaving the country to work abroad every day from Jan. 1 to April 5, the DOLE said in a statement.

The increase came despite a ban on the deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq, stricter immigration policies in Japan, Malaysia and South Korea and labor "nationalization" policies in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the department noted.

Due to this increase, the DOLE expressed confidence that it would attain its target of sending about a million Filipino workers overseas this year.

Danilo Cruz, labor undersecretary for employment, said achieving that goal would "not be difficult" at all considering that the number that were deployed last year reached more than 900,000.

"We're looking into new markets, like the Carribean. We're also studying the deployment of medical workers to Australia and New Zealand," he said in a phone interview.

Saudi Arabia remained the top destination employer of OFWs, Cruz said.

Last year, 933,588 OFWs were deployed to 180 countries. The top five destinations then were Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Japan, the United Arab Emirates and Taiwan.

Of the total number of OFWs deployed this year, 64,515 were seafarers while 205,841 were land-based.

The DOLE said that in January alone, a total of 106,618 OFWs were deployed, which is a 5.985 percent increase from the 100,597 who left the country in the same month last year.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas noted in a statement that the latest Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas report on the level of OFW remittances in early 2005 tended to boost the DOLE's optimistic projection that remittances would approach $10 billion this year.

The BSP has reported that OFW remittances for the first two months of 2005 stood at $1.443 billion, a 17.18 percent increase from the $1.231 billion reported during the same period last year.

The major sources of remittances were the United States, Saudi Arabia and Italy. *Reuters, with a report from Leila B. Salaverria*

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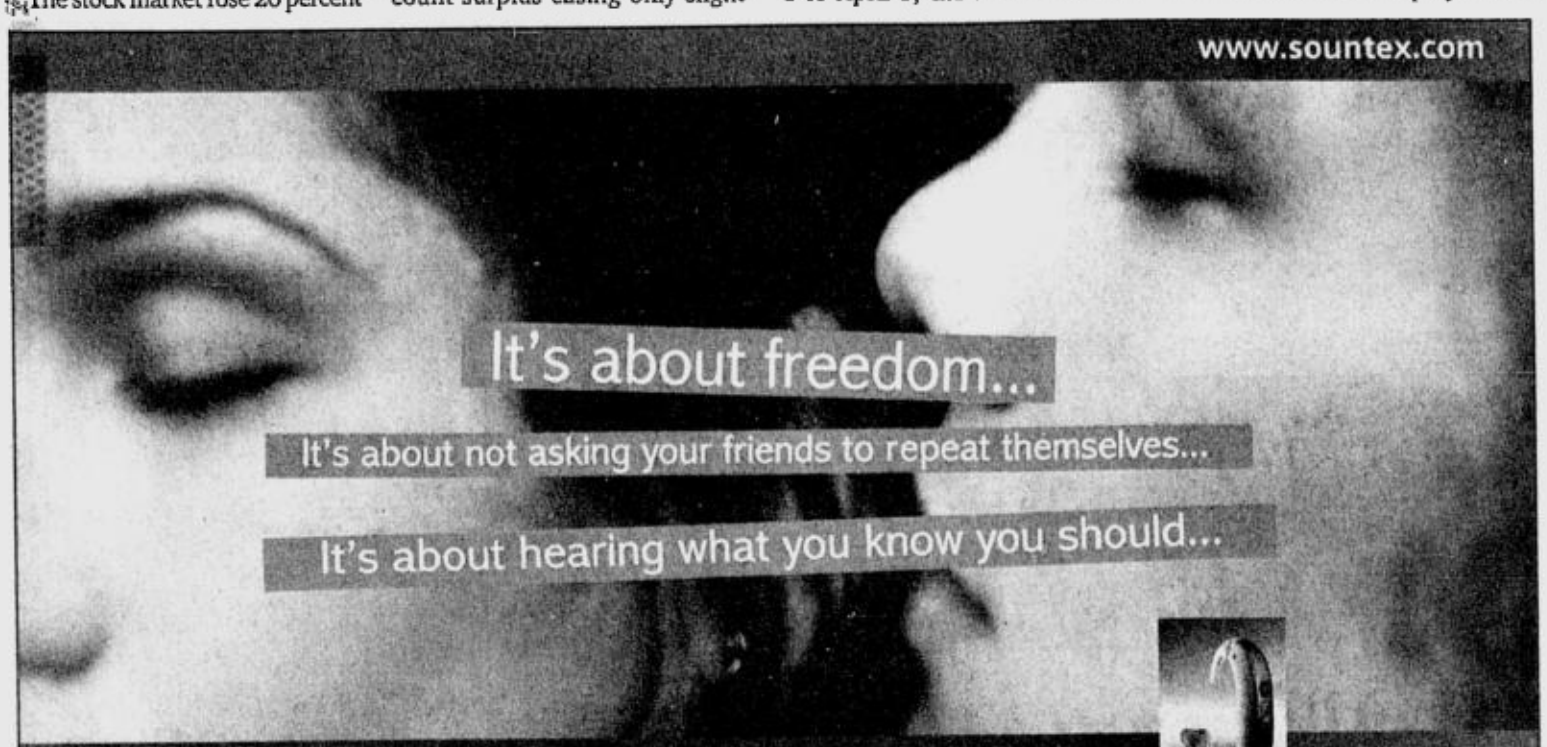

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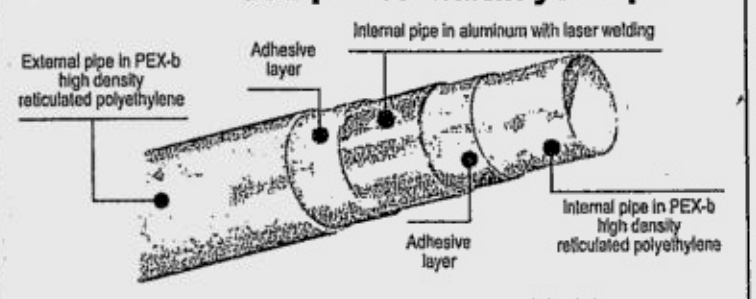

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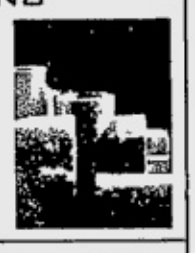

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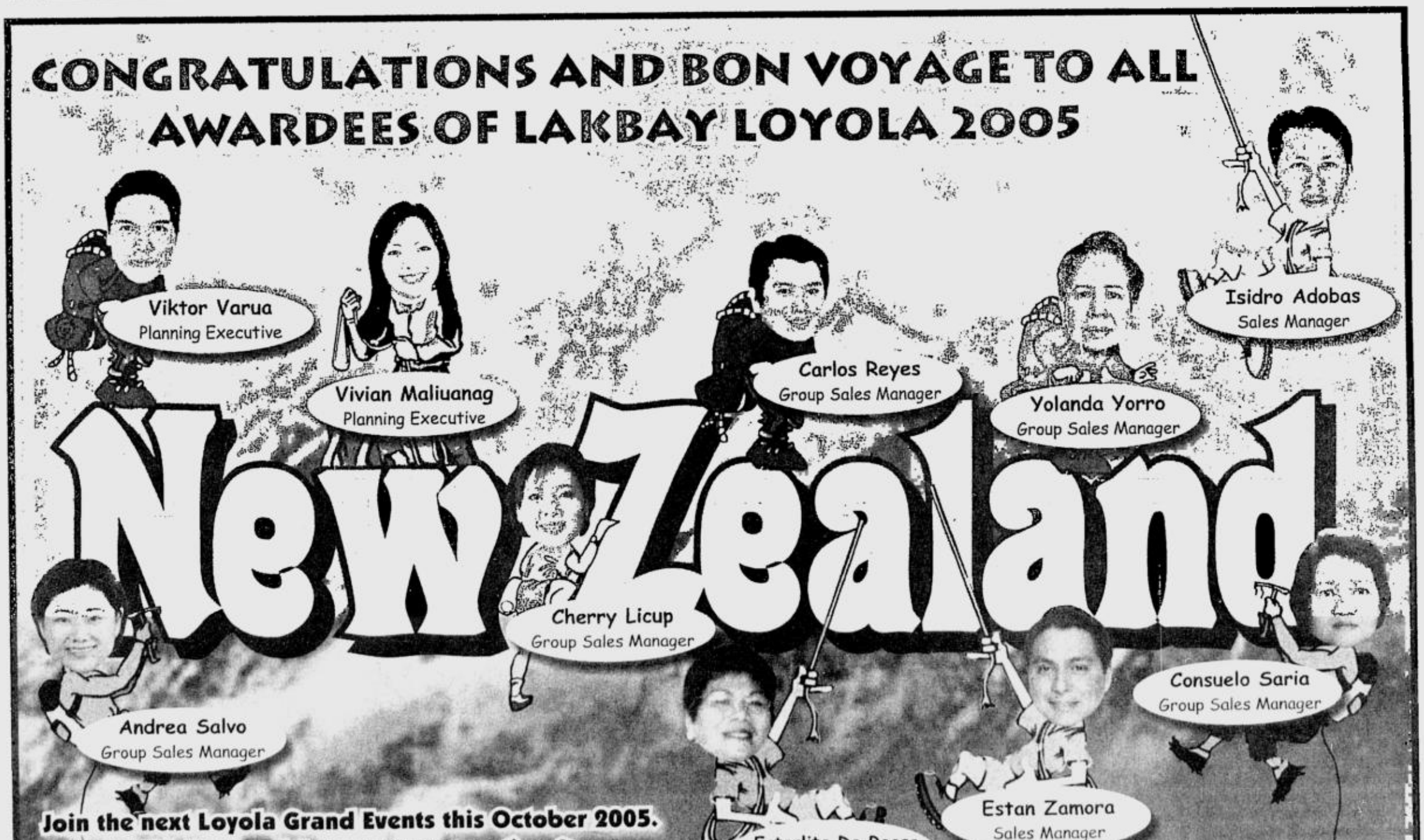

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DR. MEL Cruz, chief surgeon of the free medical mission, visits Melody Abdon and mother Edeline after a free surgery on Melody. MEI MAGSINO-LUBIS/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON

Medical mission gives smiles to poor kids

By Mei Magsino
Batangas City

NINE-YEAR-OLD Hernando Arevalo Jr. has a reason to smile now. After the operation that corrected his cleft palate, his mother Florencia wouldn't have to be called at the principal's office anymore for the troubles his brother Rommel get into defending his brother from his tormentors.

Junior was born with a cleft palate that left him with a speech defect for nine years, a disability that also became the subject of ridicule among his classmates at the Barangay Bulihan Elementary School in Malvar town.

"That's why when we heard from the social workers in Malvar that there [would be] a medical mission at the Batangas Regional Hospital, we immediately inquired how to avail of the free operation that will correct Junior's cleft palate," Florencia said.

When she took Junior to the hospital on April 1, he underwent operation that afternoon.

Florencia said she had been called to the principal's office twice when Rommel, Junior's younger brother, punched the face of a boy who mocked Junior.

She said Junior was over-aged for the second grade because he was scared to go to school. He feared that his classmate might tease him.

But when his younger brother Rommel convinced him to go to school with him, with the promise that he would defend Junior, he started schooling.

Junior was one of the 50 children from different towns in Batangas and Laguna provinces who were given free surgery to correct their cleft palates, a congenital defect caused by genetics and environment.

"Majority of the cases of cleft palates that we have operated on were caused by genetics. One or two people in the family had a history of the defect and it was passed on. Some of the cases, however, were caused by the environment, the mother had smoked or taken drugs that affected the baby," said Dr. Mel Cruz, the chief surgeon of the medical mission.

Cruz, with seven surgeons from Manila, performed the free surgeries at the BRH with the Philippine Band of Mercy (PBM), a non-government organization that helps children with disabilities, from March 30 to April 1.

In the Philippines, people with cleft palates are called *ngongo*. Cruz said this defect starts as early as the unborn baby is developing.

Cleft lip and cleft palate can occur on one side (unilateral cleft lip and/or palate), or on both sides (bilateral cleft lip and/or palate), she said.

Because the lip and the palate develop separately, it is possible for the child to have a cleft lip, a cleft palate, or both cleft lip and cleft palate.

"The procedure to correct that defect is already widely known, but some parents would rather let their children grow up with that disability. One cause is their lack of financial resources, as the operation would really be expensive if done in a private hospital. Also, some parents don't know what to do. Still, other parents believe that the defect is God-given and therefore should not do anything to change it," Cruz said.

But for those given the chance to have the free operation on their son or daughter, the medical mission was God-sent.

"My daughter Melody is a smart girl, and she is very beautiful. As a parent I won't let her grow up with her cleft palate that would make her the object of ridicule of some people," Edeline Abdon said.

Only two years and six months old, Melody has been active, trying to talk to the hospital staff, making them understand her words.

Village hosts power amid its darkness

From page A17

cility and disconnect electricity on Jan. 5.

The residents then asked that they be given until the end of January to apply for a connection with Manila Electric Co. They again requested an extension until the end of February so that the community could celebrate its fiesta on Feb. 14.

Bond

To help restore power supply to the village, Navarro said they coordinated with the local government in immediately setting up of electric posts.

In reply to the residents' request, Meralco asked for a P7.4-million bond before it could service the area. The money, it said, would be returned after the electric posts and other facilities were installed.

Navarette said their funds were not enough.

In order to raise the bond, the municipal council passed a resolution asking the Department of Energy to release money for it. Ramos said the community is entitled to financial help from the accrued "electrification fund" under ER 1-94 of the DOE.

Romeroso and other residents said they received word that it would take at least two months before Meralco could supply electricity to them.

Navarette gave assurance that they were doing everything to fast-track the setting up of electric posts which he hoped would bring back life to the community.

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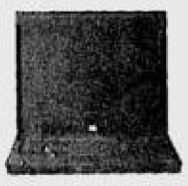

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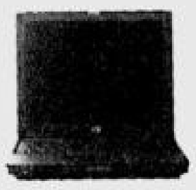

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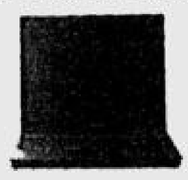

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New drive targets C. Luzon 'jueteng'

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The top police official in Central Luzon has ordered a renewed fight against illegal gambling, instructing provincial police chiefs to hit hard "jueteng" operations by stopping draws and arresting financiers.

On Tuesday, Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Central Luzon police chief, gave verbal instructions to provincial and city police chiefs during a command conference on Tuesday to intensify their fight against jueteng, according to a police official who attended the conference.

"Usapang lalaki to (This is a gentleman's agreement). We have to stop jueteng," the source quoted Albano as telling the region's police officials.

The source said Albano wanted the police to hit jueteng financiers and employees hard, noting the need to catch jueteng employees and financiers during draws.

Provincial commanders were told to concentrate efforts on eliminating jueteng.

But the INQUIRER source described the move as knee-jerk.

"Here we go again. There'll be heat and then there'll be none. It's just all going to be a seasonal campaign," the source said.

There's skepticism on how far Albano could go in the drive against illegal gambling.

Earlier, Albano was tagged as the supposed head of the group behind the "40-60 percent" sharing scheme in the jueteng protection money. The 40 percent is divided among some police officials and their benefactors while the larger chunk goes to patrons at the Philippine National Police.

Albano denied this and said he did not know anything about the practice.

Pampanga, the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo, has not seen a respite from jueteng.

The police raided suspected jueteng dens on Tuesday in Pampanga, Tarlac, Bulacan and the cities of Olongapo and Angeles. The police arrested 40 collectors and seized P30,313 in bets.

Since April 8, 16 raids were made there where 37 people were arrested and P46,810 in bets were seized. The raids covered the City of San Fernando and the towns of Mexico, Bacolor, Arayat, Sta. Ana, Candaba, Guagua, Mabalacat, Magalang and Masantol.

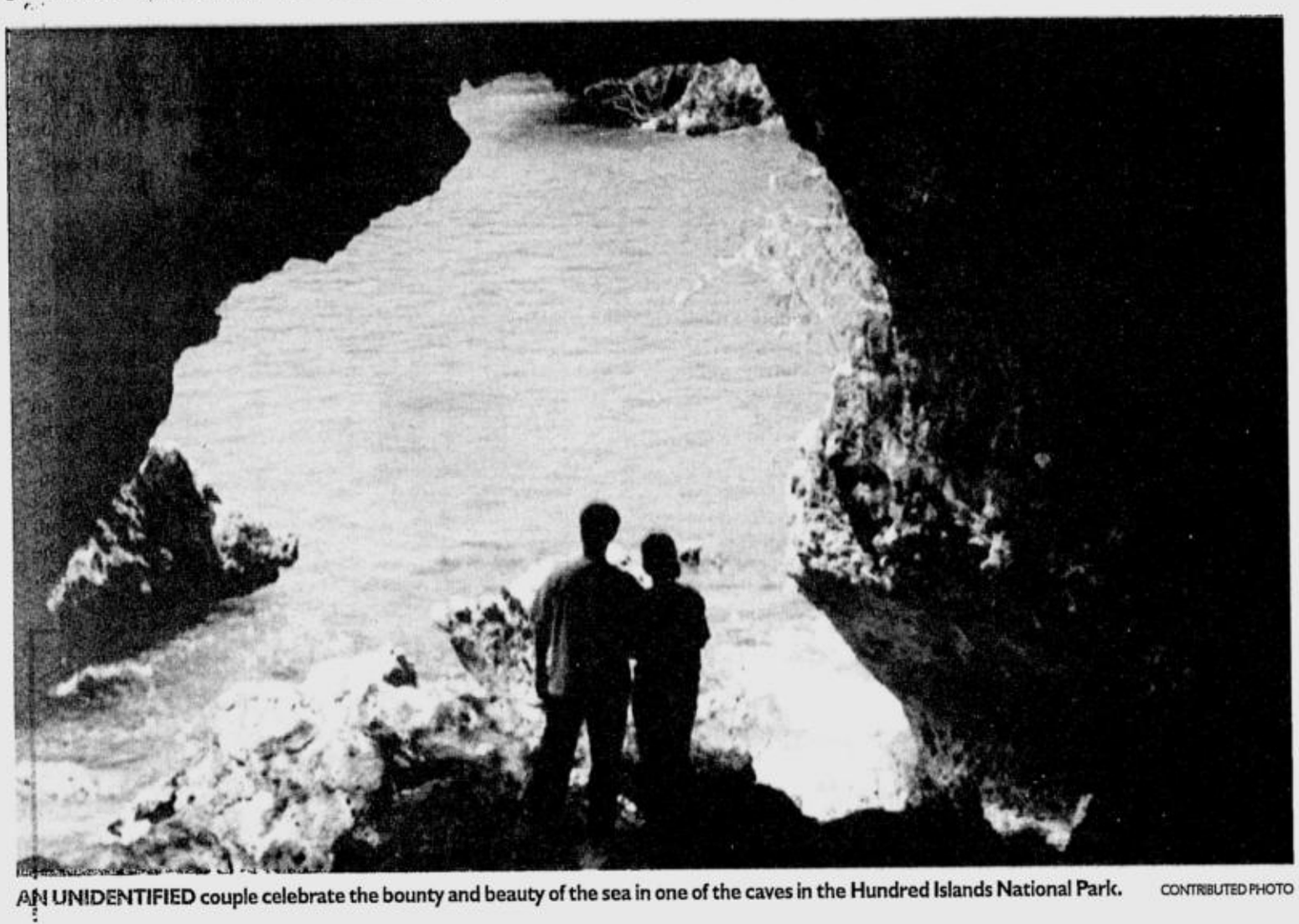
The Central Luzon police, however, failed to show reporters a list of financiers and operators of the illegal numbers game in Central Luzon, the region where jueteng is believed most rampant after the ouster of President Joseph Estrada in January 2001.

No such roster or a report on the areas, mode and extent of operations was available at the regional police intelligence office on Wednesday.

As far back as 1998, these documents used to be easily accessible to reporters. Summaries of statistical data on the anti-jueteng drive, released periodically in recent years, were also not ready.

Albano said the list of jueteng operators in the region was still "being revalidated" by provincial police directors. He did not say when the list would be completed.

In Pangasinan, jueteng bet collectors said jueteng operations have stopped since Wednesday morning. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, with a report from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



AN UNIDENTIFIED couple celebrate the bounty and beauty of the sea in one of the caves in the Hundred Islands National Park. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

2 Pangasinan cities celebrate bounty of the sea

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—This province, whose coastal towns depend on the Lingayen Gulf for livelihood, will hold various festivals starting this week to pay homage to the sea.

This capital town and Dagupan City will simultaneously stage the Pista'y Dayat and Bangus Festival, respectively, starting today (April 28, Thursday) until May 1.

The activities for the Pista'y Dayat 2005 will culminate on May 1 with the grand parade of Pangasinan festivals.

Among the featured festivals in the parade are the Galicayo Festival of Manaoag, Pandan Festival of Mapandan, Mango and Bamboo Festivals of San Carlos City, Puto Festival of Calasiao, Binongey Festival of Anda and the Pista'y Dayat of Lingayen.

"Tourism is one of the provincial government's main pursuits, and Pista'y Dayat is one of our major tourism programs," Gov. Victor Agbayani said.

Among the festival's features are art exhibits, coastal resource management program exhibitions, boat painting and sand sculpting competitions, a fluvial parade and the search for the Limgas na Dayat (Maiden of the Sea).

In Alaminos City, the city government launched last week the 4th Hundred Islands Festival to revive interest in the city's treasure, the Hundred Islands National Park, as a major tourist destination in the country.

The celebration, which will run from April 29 to May 22, combines sports, adventure and agritourism activities.

The festival will feature a cycling race (Tour de Hundred Islands, dubbed as the second biggest cycling event in the country), triathlon and wall climbing competitions, a summer camp, a photo competition highlighting the Hundred Islands, and fiesta celebrations of villages along the Alaminos coastline.

The Tour de Hundred Islands, which will be held from April 29-May 1, will start and end at the Lucap wharf here, the jump-off point to the Hundred Islands.

The tour, which will cover 642 km, will pass through 49 towns and eight cities in Northern and Central Luzon.

Organizers said the tour was sanctioned by the Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines (ICFP) and will serve as a tune-up race for athletes who will join the Tour ng Pilipinas and Southeast Asian Games.

Local officials said since the city government boosted its tourism campaign last year, tourist arrivals in Alaminos have increased by an average of 23 percent from July to December 2004.

In Dagupan City, the city government started preparations to reclaim the Guinness Book of World Records' longest barbecue title when it stages the Kalutan ed Dagupan (longest barbecue grill), a highlight of the Bangus Festival, on Saturday.

Councilor Michael Fernandez, Bangus Festival executive chair, said the barbecue party will be held to unite the residents of Dagupan to regain the 2003 title that Dagupan lost to Turkey's 1.6-km grill.

In 2003, Dagupan dethroned Peru's 613-meter long barbecue grill.

Fernandez said the Guinness requirements for the Kalutan have been prepared to ensure the city's victory.

He said they are expecting to grill 24,000 pieces of bangus over 1,000 grills lined along a 2-km stretch spanning Barrera Street to AB Fernandez West Avenue. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes and Eric Montoya, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

GMA asked to break silence on killings of Leftist activists

MALIBCONG, Abra—Bayan Muna Rep. Joel Virador said President Macapagal-Arroyo should now break her silence on the series of killings that victimized political and militant leaders during her term.

Virador, who addressed participants of the 21st Cordillera Day celebration here on April 24, said the President should use all her powers to give justice to all victims of human rights violations.

Quoting reports from Bayan Muna and its allied organizations, he said at least 30 people, 17 of them members of militant groups, have been killed from January to March this year. At least five have been reported missing.

He said investigation conducted by various groups showed that the military was involved in most of the attacks and killings.

"In other regions, military checkpoints and installations have increased. A systematic campaign to violently crush political dissent has been launched, as the attacks have reached alarming proportions equal to that of pre-martial rule declaration," he said.

Eerie silence

But Virador said the government has remained silent on these reports, "while military and paramilitary groups have been consistently implicated in such atrocities."

He said the statement of concern released by various groups, religious and government officials and individuals recently called on Ms Arroyo to relieve all soldiers and policemen who have been implicated in the killings and harassment of activists.

The statement said the victims were affiliated with legal organizations "that have become the object of vilification by those who invoke the mantra of national security to suppress the voices of dissent."

Among these victims were Bayan Muna leaders Abelardo Ladera (also a Tarlac City councilor), Romeo Sanchez and Felidito Dacut and Aglipayan priest William Tadena and Anakpawis leader Ben Concepcion.

Participants of the Cordillera Day, held to commemorate the martyrdom of Kalinga chieftain Macli-ing Dulag, honored Sanchez and other victims of military abuses in the Cordillera.

Kalinga hero

Dulag, a leader of the Butbut tribe in Tinglayan, Kalinga, was killed by Army soldiers on April 24, 1980 for leading the opposition to the Chico Dam project.

Joan Carling, chair of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, said the murder of Dulag was a classic example of how the government condoned the abuses of the military.

Carling said Dulag's attacker, Lt. Leodegario Adalem, then a new graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, was promoted by his superiors after Dulag's death.

Adalem, however, was shot and killed by New People's Army assassins in Tarlac in 2000.

"The case of [Adalem] was an example how the government condones the [abuses of the] military. Instead of punishing the perpetrators, the government would give them awards. This has become a double insult to the family of the victims who want justice. This is also sending a wrong message to the rank and file that it is okay for them to shoot, it is okay for them to kill," Carling said.

She said the killings of political activists must stop.

"After Romy Sanchez was killed, there was an intensified surveillance of CPA and other militant groups. We were named as enemies of the state. We have been open target and local officials should look into these concerns," Carling said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Carbon monoxide fumes kill 2 Cotabato miners

KORONADAL CITY—Two miners were killed while four others survived after inhaling carbon monoxide inside a tunnel in Sitio Nilingap, Barangay Lampitak in Tampakan, South Cotabato, on Monday.

The miners who died of suffocation were identified as Raul Bago, 25, and Angel Sarte, 27, both residents of Barangay Kablon in Tupi town.

The two were reportedly digging a 36-foot deep tunnel together with the four surviving victims.

Chief Insp. Jessie Ramos, Tampakan police chief, identified the four survivors as Jobert Dawang, Delfin Orbista Sr., Delfin Orbista Jr. and Alvin Palate.

Ramos said the death of the two victims could be blamed on the absence of safety measures. He said there was no appropriate ventilation which could have prevented the victim from inhaling deadly gas.

Ramos said the pressure tank used in the operations could have leaked which produced the gas.

The Provincial Mining Regulatory Board in South Cotabato issued a warning against the illegal tunnel operations of several treasure hunters proliferating in the hinterlands of Tampakan and T'boli towns.

Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes said the rising number of illegal treasure hunters in the province is now a major threat to the environment. She said these illegal operations must be stopped to prevent any natural calamity in the province.

"Many of these treasure hunters dig deep tunnels which cause soil erosion and can even cause death to those who are digging the alleged gold tunnel because of the lack of equipment and ventilation," Fuentes said.

Fuentes had ordered the closure of sluice mining in the hinterlands of T'boli.

"Local government units have already issued ordinances banning the operation of illegal treasure hunters but it seems that these are just taken for granted by operators," she said. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

EXPROPRIATION CASE

Napocor ordered to pay P22M to landowners

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A Bacolod Regional Trial Court has ordered the National Power Corp. to pay a group of landowners in this city P22.2 million for the five parcels of land in Barangay Granada that were affected by its 138-kilovolt transmission lines linking the cities of Bacolod and Cadiz.

Amount questioned

RTC Branch 41 Judge Ray Alan Drilon, in an April 21 decision released yesterday, ordered Napocor to pay Eva Ledesma, personally and in her capacity as lawyer of her relative—owners of the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Sonia Corporations—full compensation for the 18,522 square meters that was expropriated for the Bacolod-Cadiz line.

Napocor filed an action for imminent domain against Ledesma and her relatives on Oct. 14, 2001 after they refused the power firm access to their adjoining pieces of property. The court issued the writ of possession in favor of Napocor on Oct. 7, 2002 but the landowners questioned the amount set for the sale. The trial continued until the court ordered the payment of P22 million on April 21.

'Easement fee'

Drilon fixed the amount of payment at P1,200 per sq.m. as just compensation, for a total of P22,226,400. Minus the P12,966,378.50 that Napocor had already paid the landowners, the state-run firm still owned the landowners P9,260,022.

Napocor earlier argued that it should only be made to pay an "easement fee" as it only intended to acquire an easement or right-of-way over the Granada property.

But the court ordered Napocor to pay for the whole area as its line would cut across and pass through the five parcels of land of the defendants.

Hazards

The court said the high-tension transmission units that would pass through the properties and the large steel towers that would be built to carry across the transmission lines would adversely affect any potential development of the area and thus permanently deprive the landowners of beneficial use of portions of the acquired properties.

Drilon noted that the landowners had pointed out that before their properties were expropriated, they had planned to develop the area into a residential subdivision and allot some space for commercial purposes.

"The presence of steel poles and transmission lines traversing the properties of the defendants would effectively and permanently deprive the defendant landowners of the beneficial use of the land it will use and impair the potential of surrounding areas," the judge said.

Diseases

Drilon also said that the adverse impact and the environmental health hazard posed by high voltage transmission lines could not simply be taken lightly, noting that studies have shown that the electro-magnetic field (EMF) coming from high voltage transmission systems have been linked to diseases like leukemia and other dreaded illnesses.

"While direct casualty has not been established, studies undertaken by the World Bank and the Department of Health have shown that EMF was a highly suspicious cause of leukemia for people exposed to it," he added.

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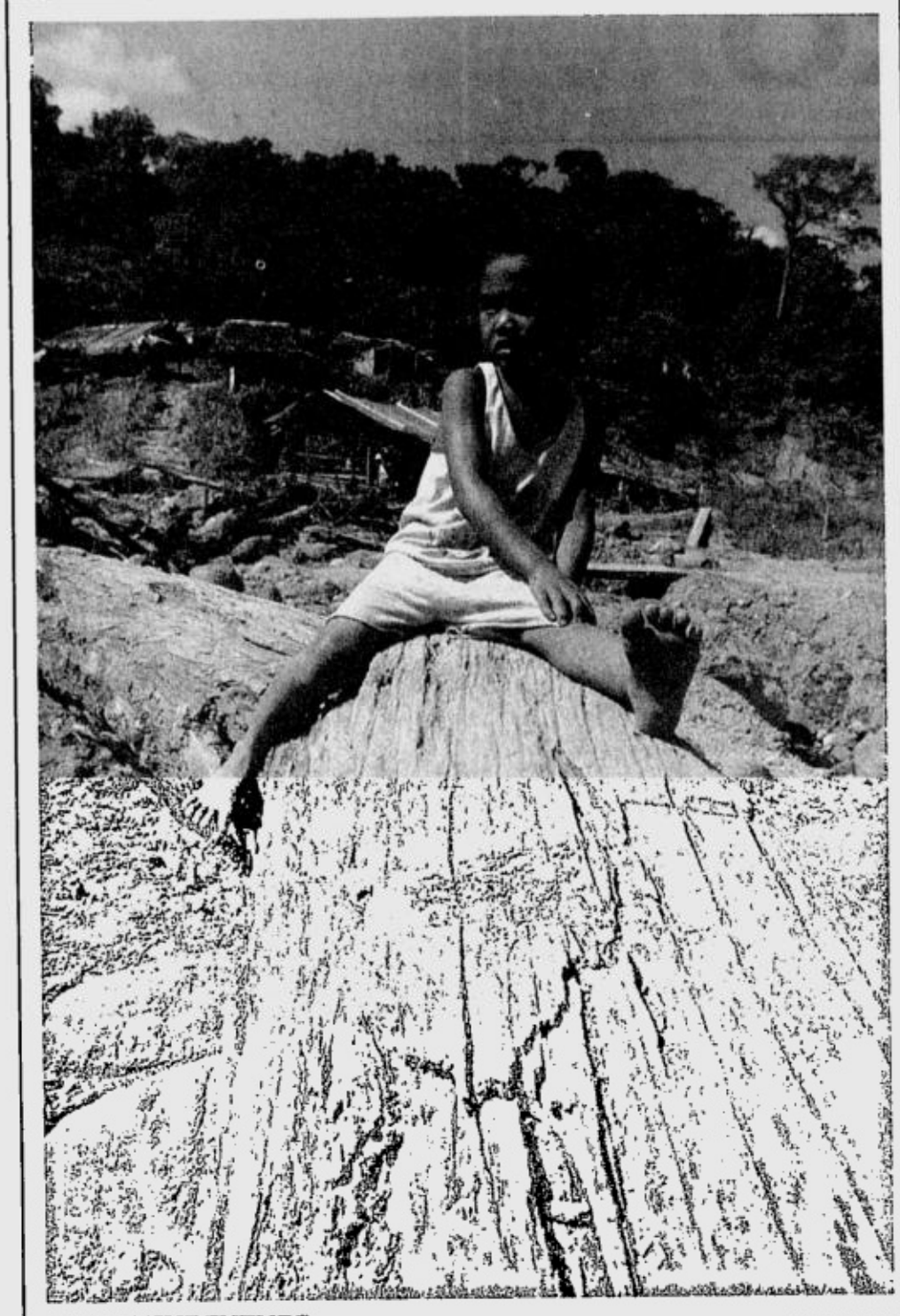

RIDING THE FUTURE VAL HANDUMON

A boy sits on a log washed away by typhoons and landslides in Umiray, Quezon, one of the areas hardest hit by devastation brought about by forest destruction.

SC suspends Antique judge for brokering land deal

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Supreme Court has meted a six-month suspension on a judge in Antique for brokering the sale of a piece of property in exchange for a commission.

In an order promulgated by the SC third division on April 6 and posted on its website, the high court suspended Judge Felixberto Barte of the 1st Municipal Circuit Trial Court (MCTC) of Tobias Fornier, Antique, for violating the Code of Judicial Conduct.

In its order, the high court said Barte violated the code's provisions that mandate judges to "refrain from financial and business dealings that tend to reflect adversely on the court's impartiality, interfere with the proper performance of judicial activities, or increase involvement with lawyers or persons likely to come before the court."

The court said that by acting as agent in the sale of the property, Barte "increased the possibility of his disqualification to act as an impartial judge in the event that a dispute involving the said contract of sale arises."

The order was penned by Associate Justice Renato Corona and concurred in by Associate Justices Artemio Panganiban, Angelina Sandoval Gutierrez, Conchita Morales and Cancio Garcia.

The case was prompted by a complaint filed by Editha Catbagan on Sept. 17, 2001 before the Office of the Court Administrator, accusing Barte of "grave and serious misconduct."

In her complaint, Catbagan alleged that Barte failed to give her the complete amount of her commission on the sale of pieces of property to the Church of Jesus of Latter Day Saints as they earlier agreed.

Catbagan said she, Barte and Abraham Pedriña agreed to broker the sale of properties to the buyer for a commission.

They agreed that for every transaction exceeding P1,000,000, Barte and Pedriña would each receive P100,000 while the remaining amount of the commission would go to Barte.

She said they sold to the buyer lots owned by Bitoon Cezar worth P1,120,300 and the pieces of property of Aurea Clarin that were sold for P2,199,000. Another lot owned by Eleanor Checa-Santos was sold on Feb. 12, 2001 for P2,300,000.

She said she was entitled to a P300,000 commission for the first two transactions alone but Barte had offered her only P25,000.

When she reminded the judge of their agreement, Barte allegedly told her to "go to court," said Catbagan in her complaint.

In his comment to the complaint, Barte called the allegations "baseless and designed merely to harass and dishonor" him.

He said the complainant was not involved in the transaction other than attending the initial meeting with the chapter president of the Church of Jesus of Latter Day Saints.

The judge also submitted an affidavit of Pedriña, supporting his claim that they never agreed on a commission scheme on the sale of the properties.

Dagupan to host 2nd 'bangus' congress

DAGUPAN CITY—The country's bangus (milkfish) industry stakeholders will meet here today to discuss ways to address issues affecting the industry and to enhance the competitiveness of the national fish in the world market.

Some 330 national and local aquaculture experts will convene during the 2nd National Bangus Congress and Exhibition at the Leisure Coast Resort here to draw up plans to boost the industry.

Government officials, fish farmers, representatives from the academe, research and financial institutions and support industries are expected to attend the congress.

Among the topics that will be discussed in the two-day congress are constraints to milkfish production, bangus fry importation, marketing and promotion, and fish diseases.

BFAR Director Malcolm Sarmiento said the congress will provide the drive for bangus industry stakeholders to develop offshore and inland bodies of water for aquaculture, reduce production cost, enhance productivity and create more jobs.

He said participants will draft an action plan to be incorporated in the Philippine bangus master plan.

The affair was organized by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Department of Agriculture and the Bangus Council of the Philippines. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Plan to create new province faces tough fight

By Jani Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

MAASIN CITY—Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias said the bill creating a new province in Eastern Visayas composed of the nine towns of the fifth district of Leyte would be strongly opposed by the league of provinces.

Just like the plans of three representatives in Cebu creating three separate provinces in their districts, the bill would not pass scrutiny in Congress, Lerias said of the bill filed by Leyte 5th district Rep. Carmen Cari.

She said that with the creation of another province, the internal revenue allotment (IRA) of Southern Leyte would be decreased by about P7 million a year. "I don't know about the other provinces but ours would definitely lose about seven million."

She said the bigger the province the bigger would be the IRA slash should another province is created. The fifth district of Leyte covers nine Cebuano-speaking towns immediately northwest of Southern Leyte.

Among the towns in the fifth district, Matalom, Bato and Hilongos have previously filed separate resolutions declaring they would want to be placed under the jurisdiction of Southern Leyte, complaining that they had not been getting the basic services they needed from Leyte province.

The resolutions also pointed out that their towns are closer to Maasin City, the Southern Leyte capital, which is only 26-36 km away compared to Tacloban City, which is more than 100 km from Matalom, Bato and Hilongos.

Cari had said she has only the best intentions when she filed the bill creating a new province covering her congressional district. She said she wanted to divide Leyte because it is "too big a province."

Leyte, which has a land area of 5,712.80 square km with 43 towns, two cities and five congressional districts, has a population of more than 1.5 million. It is classified as a first-class province with an income of more than P720 million as of 2003.

Eastern Visayas as a whole, however, is considered one of the country's poorest regions.

Cassava sends 10 to hospitals in N. Cotabato

LIBUNGAN, North Cotabato—At least 10 people, including children, were hospitalized after eating cassava cooked in coconut milk.

Nine of them were rushed to the Cotabato Regional and Medical Center (CRMC) at 1 a.m. Wednesday after most of them became unconscious.

According to Delia Custodio, a relative of the food poisoning victims, a family member bought the cassava at a public market in Midsayap town.

Custodio said the victims suffered severe stomach pains, dizziness and vomiting after eating the cassava.

They were rushed to a private clinic in Libungan but attending physicians referred them to the CRMC for further treatment.

Custodio identified the victims as Vicente, 47, Elmer, 28, Anne-Anne, 25, Rachel, 9, Ronilo, 15, Angelo, 8, Flora Mae, 7, Bernalyn, 6, all surnamed Custodio; a relative, Judito Andos, 21 and an unidentified neighbor.

The victims were all residents of remote Barangay Montay here.

Custodio told CRMC doctors that the family eats cassava often since "this is among the cheapest food we can afford."

"We don't know whether there were poisonous substances mixed with the cassava when it was cooked or it was not prepared properly," Delia said, adding that she recalled the food poisoning of schoolchildren in Bohol that left several of the children dead.

She stressed that the food was prepared by family members in their homes so it was impossible for anybody to sabotage the preparations.

Libungan Mayor Ronaldo Pader immediately directed the town health chief to provide assistance to the victims and ensure no similar case of food poisoning would happen again in Barangay Montay.

Delia said they returned to the public market to look for the vendor where the cassava was bought but he was no longer there.

In North Cotabato, farmers in upland communities have turned to eating "kayos" (wild jam) in lieu of corn and rice as the El Niño phenomenon started to take its toll.

Health workers and agriculture officials said eating "kayos" is safe provided these are properly prepared.

They said a process has to be followed to separate the toxic content of wild yam. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

AIR MATERIEL WING SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION INC.
Corner Boni Serrano and 18th Avenues, Murphy, Cubao, Quezon City 1109
Tel: 911-3030 (connecting all departments) Fax: 911-3426

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Board Resolution Number 2005-153 dated 12 April 2005, the Air Materiel Wing Savings and Loan Association Inc. will hold a **SPECIAL ELECTION** for three (3) vacant seats in the AMWSLAI Board of Trustees on 27 May 2005 at the AMWSLAI Villamor Branch, Corner 4th and Manlunas Streets, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The agenda for the Special Election shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. New Business
   a. Declaration of Commencement of Voting
   b. Casting of Votes
   c. Declaration of Closing of Voting
   d. Canvassing of Votes
   e. Proclamation of Winners
4. Adjournment

To attain the objective of ensuring active and personal participation of the general membership, as expressed in Board Resolution No. 2005-153, members are encouraged to attend and cast their votes personally. The candidates are likewise advised to support the Board's objective by avoiding solicitation and use of proxies in this special election.

(Signed)
ANSELMO R GERONIMO
Corporate Secretary

AIR MATERIEL WING SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION INC.
Corner Boni Serrano and 18th Avenues, Murphy, Cubao, Quezon City 1109
Tel: 911-3030 (connecting all departments) Fax: 911-3426

ANNOUNCEMENT

Pursuant to paragraph 4 (a) 1-6 of the Guidelines for Special General Election of the AMWSLAI Board of Trustees, promulgated by the AMWSLAI COMELEC, the following are the qualifications for candidacy:

1. He must be a regular member of AMWSLAI.
2. He shall at least be 25 years of age at the time of election/ appointment.
3. He shall at least be a COLLEGE graduate OR at least have FIVE (5) years experience in business, OR shall have undergone BSP training in NSSLA or banking operations; provided, however, that undergraduates eligible to be elected as trustees in the NSSLA's by-laws may be allowed as may be approved by the Monetary Board.

Quoted below is the communication from BSP on subject matter dated 27 Sep 2004:

"In deciding regarding this matter, the Board of Trustees should be guided by the requirements under Section 4141S.1 to S.2 of the Manual of Regulations for Non-Bank Financial Institutions (as amended by Circular No. 396 dated 20 August 2003). Subsection 4141S.2 (2) specifically states that a trustee shall be at least a college graduate or have at least five (5) years experience in business or shall have undergone any BSP training in NSSLA or banking operations; *provided, however, that undergraduates eligible to be elected as trustees in the NSSLA's by-laws may be allowed as may be approved by the Monetary Board.*"

In this regard, the Association should secure prior Monetary Board approval in cases of undergraduates eligible to be elected as trustees in the NSSLA's By-Laws before assuming office as trustee."

4. He must have unencumbered capital contribution with the Association in his own name of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00).
5. He does not fall under any of the following disabilities and disqualifications:
   a. Having been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;
   b. Is a delinquent borrower, as defined in Section 2(c), Article IV of the AMWSLAI By-Laws, as amended;
   c. Possesses any of the disqualifications under the law and/or regula- tions of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; or
   d. Having violated election guidelines formulated by the COMELEC and approved by the Board of Trustees.

For orderly processing, it is advisable for potential candidate who is still in the active service of the AFP or PNP to secure permission from his service commander or equivalent authority to run in the election and to execute written undertaking of his willingness to retire within six (6) months after the beginning of his office term if he qualifies.

Filing of candidacy **begins on 02 May 2005 and ends on 06 May 2005** at the close of office hours. Please secure and submit application forms at the Office of the Corporate Secretary, 6th Floor, AMWSLAI's office in Corner Boni Serrano and 18th Avenues, Murphy, Cubao, Quezon City, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

(Signed)
MAJ GEN NEON D EBUEN AFP (RET)
COMELEC CHAIRMAN

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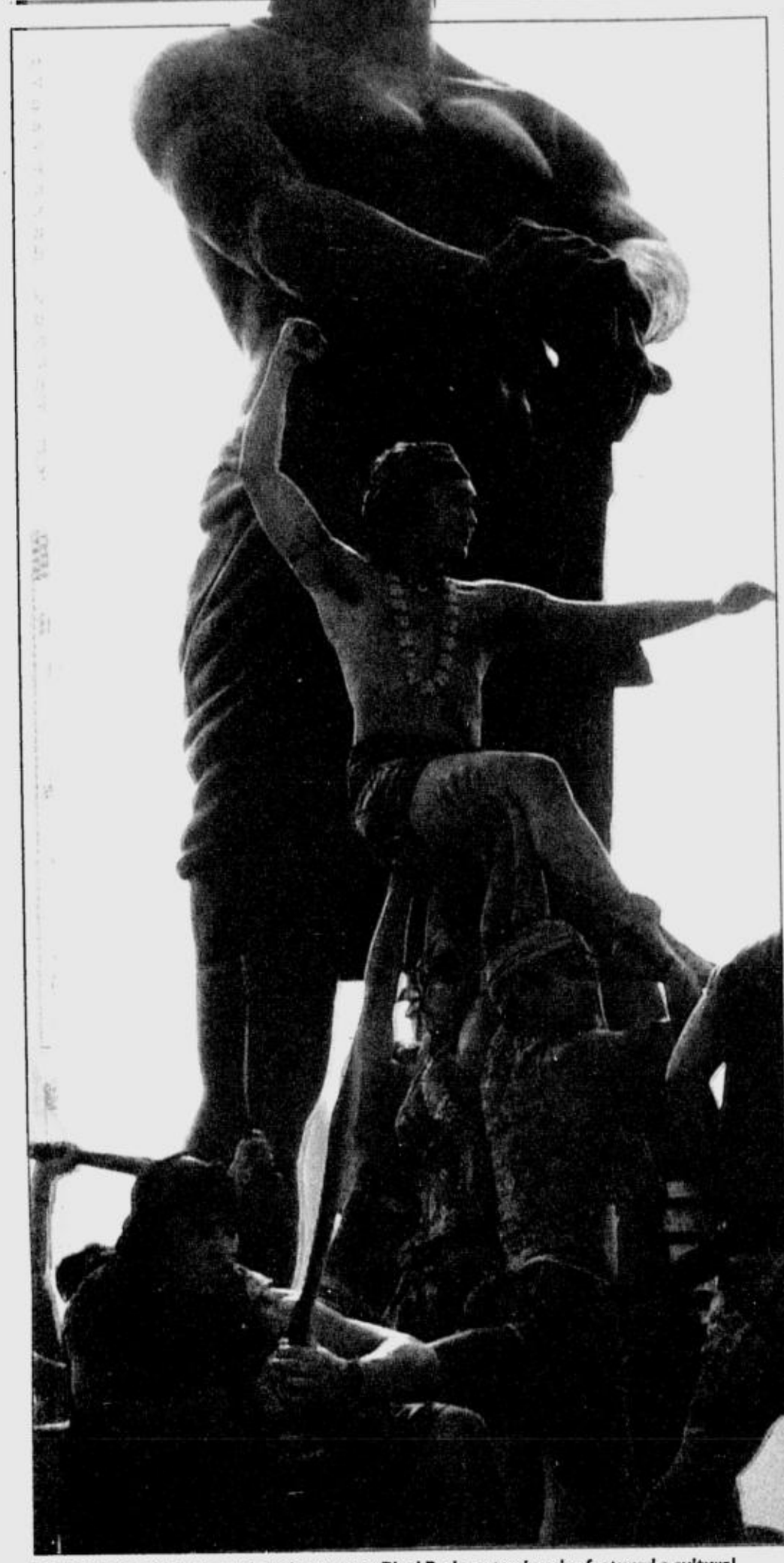
METRO

Text us your feedback: inquirer met ... 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Editor* **Ester G. Dipasupil** ■ *Assistant Editor* **Cenon B. Bibe Jr.**



THE UNVEILING of Lapu-Lapu's statue at Rizal Park yesterday also featured a cultural presentation. ERIK ARAZAS

PRESIDENTIAL ENDORSEMENT

MMDA chair doing a good job–GMA

By Gil Cabacungan, Tarra V. Quismundo, Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Tina G. Santos, Fran Katigbak

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is standing by her traffic czar, Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, even if the majority of the metropolis' mayors wants him kicked out of office.

"I think he (Fernando) is doing his job very well. He has the trust of the President," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday.

Ermita was reacting to reports that Metro Manila mayors were interpreting a recent Supreme Court decision on the MMDA's confiscation of driver's licenses as an indictment of Fernando's iron-fist traffic management, and that the former Marikina City mayor should be replaced by the President. The President has no complaints about Fernando's traffic policies, and this was bolstered by a recent survey showing the MMDA chief getting the highest approval rating among her Cabinet members, he added.

Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Joe Nathan Tenefrancia said the high court ruling "merely emphasized that the MMDA may continue to enforce traffic rules but not enact traffic ordinances." The SC last week upheld a ruling by the Parañaque Regional Trial Court which bars the MMDA from confiscating driver's licenses without giving motorists due process.

Tenefrancia said the SC ruling merely stated that the case became moot and academic after the MMDA issued its own circular in 2004 which stopped its enforcers from confiscating driver's licenses.

Fernando said the high court's decision practically meant a status quo for the agency, as its enforcers had not been confiscating licenses since last year. He clarified that all of the agency's much-criticized traffic schemes and programs were in fact based on existing national and local laws.

"I have only two bosses," said Fernando. " My first boss is the President, because the MMDA is under the office of the President and she is the only one who could appoint its officials. The second is the Metro Manila Council, which is composed of Metro mayors. But the mayors are not my bosses individually,".

"The President should consider as MMDA chair someone who can accept he will only be a coordinating person and not a chief executive," said Mandaluyong Mayor Neptali "Boyet" Gonzales II.

"The only problem with Chairman Fernando is he sometimes forgets to advise the mayors about his programs," said Ejercito, one of the three remaining opposition mayors in Metro Manila. But Ejercito is not supporting the call for the ouster of Fernando, a strong ally of Ms Arroyo. "In fairness to Chairman Fernando, he has been supportive of my government," he added. "The problem here is only a little misunderstanding because of a lack of communication," Ejercito said.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, on the other hand, said the MMDA "cannot enact laws. It doesn't have police powers. The legislative power necessary to create an ordinance to implement traffic laws, including confiscation of licenses of erring drivers and collecting fines from them, belongs to the mayors," he said.

"I am not against how Chairman Fernando runs the MMDA," said Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad. "There are just certain issues we disagree on, including the power to legislate ordinances."

Fernando should not insist on implementing projects without ordinances from the local government," said Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

FERNANDO

BINAY

TRINIDAD

ATIENZA

EJERCITO

GONZALES

Mactan battle marked with Lapu-Lapu's return to park

By Leila B. Salaverria

IT MAY have gone down once, but on the 484th anniversary of the Battle of Mactan yesterday, the controversial statue of Filipino hero Lapu-Lapu rose again at the historic Rizal Park in Manila.

The statue, which was earlier torn down for repairs and because it had posed a public hazard when strong winds caused it to sway, stirred a debate when the National Historical Institute opposed its presence in the park named in honor of national hero Dr. Jose Rizal.

Historical site

The park was declared a historical site in 1995 as a tribute to heroes who lost their lives there when it was still known as Bagumbayan.

The NHI had cited a presidential decree prohibiting the modification of the features of any national shrine, monument, or landmark.

Sen. Richard Gordon had pushed for the installation of the 30-foot statue at the park when he was tourism secretary.

Convergence

Gordon said the Cebuano hero's presence at Rizal Park symbolizes the convergence of Philippine history, by linking Lapu-Lapu and Rizal to the fight for Filipino freedom against foreign invasion and oppression.

The killing of Portuguese Ferdinand Magellan, the first explorer to circumnavigate the world, during the Battle of Mactan in 1521 in Cebu, had been attributed to Lapu-Lapu.

The Battle of Mactan has been hailed as the first battle by locals against a foreign invading power.

DEPRECIATION FEARED

Muntinlupa seeks halt to projects in NBP area

By Fran Katigbak

THE CITY of Muntinlupa yesterday asked for a halt in land development projects at the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) Reservation Area.

Several sectors had been eyeing a share of the estimated 530-hectare NBP property in the city.

"Muntinlupa is opposed to the segregation of the property," said Councilor Raul Corro, a representative in the technical working group for the reservation area.

Corro said there is a need to formulate a master plan before sectors interested in the land begin development activities.

The NBP land is considered prime property because it is located behind posh Ayala Alabang Village, which has a big real estate value.

"A hodgepodge kind of development will reduce the value of the NBP land," said Corro. The projects could also uproot about 10,000 people living in the area.

He said the master plan should consider the projects' impact on the environment, sustainable development, and the needs and interests of the city.

The local government code entitles Muntinlupa to an equitable share of the NBP property. The city should also be consulted about development proposals.

Corro said the city government plans to use about 35 hectares of the NBP property for a government center, a material recovery facility, and a tourist spot.

5 robbery suspects slain in QC; grenade rocks Muntinlupa

By DJ Yap and Fran Katigbak

FIVE alleged members of the notorious "Estribo Gang" were gunned down Tuesday night after an alleged shootout with Central Police District members in Quezon City.

A police report said, lawmen spotted seven men near the pedestrian overpass in Barangay Old Balara along Commonwealth Avenue at about 10 p.m.

'Waiting for victims'

The men, the report noted, were "seemingly waiting for would-be victims."

When policemen, who had been staking out the place for their anti-robbery operations, came up to the men and asked them to freeze, the latter allegedly suddenly drew handguns and started opening fire.

The lawmen returned fire and killed five of the suspects, police said.

Darkness as cover

Two other suspects reportedly managed to flee using the darkness as cover.

All the slain suspects, most of whom were heavily tattooed, were not yet identified as of press time, except their supposed leader.

Police identified the alleged leader as a certain "Mik-mik."

Investigators alleged that they were members of the "Estribo Gang," a band of robbers known to victimize passengers of FX cabs and jeepneys.

Guns recovered

Police recovered four .38-caliber revolvers and a fragmentation grenade from the suspects.

CPD director Nicasio Radovan Jr. was quick to dispel speculation that it had been a rubout.

"It was a shootout. It would be difficult to stage a rubout because the area was very dark," he said.

The bodies were found far from one another, unlike staged rubouts in which the victims' bodies are usually piled together, he added.

Witness Julie Jermis-Lacaran positively identified three of the suspects as among the group of men who had robbed her of cash and valuables on April 15 along Commonwealth Avenue, police said.

Over in Muntinlupa City, seven people were wounded when a grenade exploded near City Hall last night.

Exploded in hand

One of the victims, identified as Ramon Borja, 57, was seriously hurt when an Mk2 grenade exploded in his hand.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rongavilla said Borja was at the wheels of a Kia Pregio which was cruising at the corner of the National Road and Lake View subdivision when a woman approached him.

The woman, a certain Rachel "Che Che" de Vera, then secretly handed Borja the grenade, Rongavilla said.

Caught by surprise

The officer said Borja was caught by surprise when he saw that it was a grenade. However, he could not throw it away because a lot of people were around.

Borja also could not bring the grenade into his vehicle because a nephew was inside.

So he just held the grenade outside the vehicle. It exploded and blew off his hand.

Nonetheless, shrapnel wounded six bystanders.

Robbery case

Rongavilla said Borja had filed a robbery case against De Vera. A hearing was set for April 29.

The suspect was a friend of Borja's daughter.

De Vera allegedly abused that friendship when she stole cash and jewelry worth almost a million from the family, Rongavilla said, quoting statements by Borja's relatives.

The site of the explosion was a few meters away from the Muntinlupa City Hall.

3-YEAR-OLD BOY'S KIDNAPPING

Roldan 'friend' charged

By Armand N. Nocum

THE GIRLFRIEND of former actor and Rep. Dennis Roldan and five others were formally charged with the kidnapping of a 3-year-old boy in Pasig City.

Suzette Wang was charged amid her insistence that the police had nothing on her.

Her co-accused are Noel Andres, Rowena Andres, Romeo Orcajada, Octabio Garces and Adrian Domingo.

Roldan, Mitchel Gumabao in real life, was charged with the crime before the Pasig Regional Trial Court (RTC) last month.

An eighth supposed member of the kidnap gang, Alberto Pagdanganan, was excluded after he executed extra-judicial confessions claiming the involvement of the seven accused in the Feb. 9 kidnapping.

In a resolution filed before the Pasig RTC, prosecutors Pablo Formaran and Irwin Maraya said some of the accused confessed their participation in the crime.

Apart from Pagdanganan, who has been placed under the Witness Protection Program, Garces also admitted to have been "present in the planning stage and during the ransom negotiations."

For their part, Domingo, Orcajada, Andres and Rowena admitted watching over the boy but claimed that Pagdanganan and Garces gave them the impression that he was only involved in a custody battle.

As for Wang, she insisted that the confessions of Pagdanganan and Garces were not enough to pin her down.

She added that the claim of Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) men of seeing her at the place where the boy was kept, as well as at the Maximus Restaurant owned by Roldan, was not fully substantiated.

Wang earlier asked Pacer to furnish her with a copy of the "surveillance video and photograph" showing her with the alleged kidnappers. The Pacer refused, saying it would put their men and equipment in jeopardy.

In deciding to include Wang in the complaint, the prosecutors gave credence to Pacer's claim.

"Respondent Wang would have to do better than argue lack of sufficient identification to overcome the presumption of regularity in the performance of official functions," their resolution said.

Besides, they said the confessions of Garces and Pagdanganan were admissible as "circumstantial evidence" against Wang.

They also noted that among the respondents, it was only Wang who was acquainted with the Yu family and the one seen by the boy's mother driving the car allegedly used in the kidnapping.

Ciara's death spurs health awareness

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WHEN she was alive, Ciara Marie Abalos, 19, would go to poor communities to teach children.

Her death, brought about by E. Coli infection, has paved the way for a program to educate residents about infectious diseases.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Neptali Gonzales II has declared April as "infectious disease awareness and prevention month" in Mandaluyong City.

He made the declaration through Executive Order No. 3, which mandates the City Health Department and the Task Force on Health Care Delivery to spearhead the campaign.

"It is (my) intent to let this moment of grief be transformed into a long-lasting legacy, perpetuating the memory of Ciara Marie Abalos and others like her whose lives were cut short by an unfortunate attack of infectious diseases," Gonzales said in his order.

Ciara, eldest daughter of Rep. Benhur Abalos, was laid to rest yesterday at Paradise Memorial Park in Mandaluyong City.

In his order, Gonzales also told the Division of City Schools to provide students adequate information about infectious diseases.

He said a separate fund from the annual budget should be allotted for the program.

E. Coli may be found in food, beaches or wells contaminated by feces, experts say.

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza greets Marcelo H. del Pilar's great granddaughter Benita Santos during the unveiling of the hero's monument at Plaza Plaridel across Manila Zoo. ERIK ARAZAS

Train drags, kills man in Paco railway mishap

THE TRACKS of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) claimed yet another life in Manila early yesterday morning.

The victim, identified as Niel Serrano, 27, was reportedly under the influence of alcohol when the accident happened.

Police said that at around 2 a.m. Serano was chatting with neighbor Lito Lobredo, 50, when a train going to Tutuban passed through the PNR Compound in Paco.

The train hit then dragged Serano for about 70 meters, killing him on the spot, police said.

Lobredo escaped unhurt, police added.

According to a 2004 report, railway dwellers have gotten used to the rhythm of passing trains but have recently been getting hit by passing locomotives.

Residents are said to have been used to southbound trains running on the left (if one is facing south) and northbound trains running the opposite way.

When train authorities decide to switch lanes, changes to the left-lane driving become fatal to unsuspecting residents. *Jean Marionne Bermudez, trainee*

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Essay collection to be launched

"FILIPINO Legacy in Australia," a collection of essays that narrates how the author Dr. Reynaldo Dante Juanta's love of country was made visible by his concrete works for the benefit of Filipino expatriates in Australia, will be launched on Friday, April 29 at 2 p.m. at the Philippine Normal University Café, Taft Avenue, Manila. Juanta was a professor at PNU.

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M.H. del Pilar statue unveiled in Manila

By Tina G. Santos

OFFICIALS of the city of Manila and Samahang Plaridel emphasized the importance of media to society as they unveiled a bronze statue of journalist and propagandist Marcelo H. del Pilar yesterday.

"The Filipino journalist must strive to embody the ideals of Del Pilar," said Mayor Lito Atienza as he led the unveiling at a children's park, fronting the Manila Zoo in Malate.

He added, "One does not need to be a hero like him. Every story rendered with the highest standard of journalism, no matter how simple, does Del Pilar proud.

The seven-foot statue stands on a six-foot pedestal at Plaza Plaridel, which is across M. Adriatico Street from the Manila Zoo in Malate.

"Journalists have been playing a key role in every major struggle for freedom, justice and democracy at various stages of Philippine history. May they continue to uphold the dignity of their profession despite the threats to their lives," the mayor said.

Del Pilar, whose pen name was Plaridel, fills the pages of history as a selfless propagandist during the Spanish colonial period.

His stewardship of the reformist newspaper La Solidaridad helped crystalize nationalist sentiments and ignite libertarian ideas in the 1890s.

Del Pilar edited and co-published the newspaper in Spain.

The P1.3-million statue was crafted by Julie Lluch and is a joint project of Samahang Plaridel, a press association composed of veteran journalists, and the city government.

The statue depicts a standing Plaridel with one hand holding the reformist newspaper and the other raised with a finger pointing upward.

"He is pointing a finger at the abuses of the Spanish government, explaining [its] evils... the ills of the society during the time of the friars," Lluch said.

Apart from press club and city officials, relatives of Plaridel, including his 87-year-old granddaughter, lawyer Benita Santos, witnessed the occasion.

"I'm very happy for this tribute. My grandfather was considered a failure when he died but history has vindicated him," Santos said.

Jacob needs help

IN TWO months, Jacob Ullrich Macmilan will be turning three.

For him to survive beyond the age of two will be a miracle since majority of children afflicted with biliary atresia do not live long.

But Jacob, who was diagnosed with the disease when he was 9 months old, might just live longer if he undergoes a liver transplant soon.

Biliary atresia is a rare liver disease characterized by the absence of bile ducts.

The only treatment for the disease is a liver transplant, which is done at Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in Kaosuing, Taiwan, for P3 million.

His parents, Allan and Adelaida are asking kind-hearted readers to help them raise the amount.

The family could be reached through 2362360, 0916-6201992, or through LIFT- B.A.B.I.E.S. at 8244621 or 0918-9263237.

Donations can be sent to the account of Adelaida Macmilan ITF Jacob Ullrich Macmilan through China Bank (Examiner Branch) at 156-041521-5 or 156-046131-1; BPI (Concepcion Malabon) at 4619-0036-89. *Jocelyn Uy*

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April 28:
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- Variety and comedy show, 8pm to 2am at the City Plaza

April 29:
- Gilon!Gilon! Street Dancing competition, 1pm at downtown

April 30:
- Kalutan ed Dagupan Longest Grill Party, 4:30pm at AB Fernandez Avenue
- Intensity G Concert and fireworks, 8pm to 2am at the City Plaza & AB Fernandez Avenue

May 1:
- Pista'y Dayat Tondalingan, 8am at Tondalingan Beach
- Intensity G Palaro sa Dagat, 10am at Tondalingan Beach

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- Tondalingan Beach, April 30 to May 1

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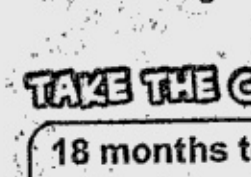

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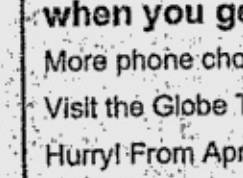

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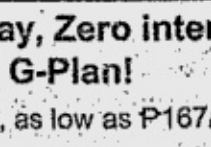

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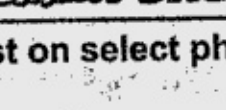

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GOLF: BMW Open, Day One; 1 p.m. (r-midnight); ESPN—The world's best golfers gather in Shanghai, China.

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs, First Round, Nuggets vs Spurs, Game 2; 8 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports; Grizzlies vs Suns; 10:30 a.m. (r-10:30 p.m.); RPN 9—The battle continues in the NBA playoffs.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

NELSON Asaytono of Red Bull tries to break through Sta. Lucia's defense in their game yesterday. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Realtors continue surge sans Aquino

By June Navarro

STA. LUCIA Realty is slowly getting comfortable with Marlou Aquino on the sidelines.

Hardly missing the 6-foot-9 center for the second straight game, the Realtors staved off a desperate closing rally by Red Bull Barako to hack out a convincing 99-87 win in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Dennis Espino tossed in 28 points from an almost impeccable 10-of-12 shooting, while Chester Tolomia finished with a career-high 22 points as the Realtors notched their fourth straight win. Sta. Lucia has not won four games in a row since the elimination round of the 2003 All-Filipino Cup.

"I give this game to Chester (Tolomia)," said Sta. Lucia coach Alfrancis Chua after the Realtors snared a fifth win in 10 outings.

"He has the talent, it's just a matter of giving him the right breaks," added Chua of Tolomia, who was waived by Barangay Ginebra in 2003 and spent a year in the PBL before the Realtors gave him a new lease in life.

In the second game, Jerald Honeycutt had 24 points and 12 rebounds and Talk 'N Text held off FedEx and Renren Ritualo, 102-96.

The Phone Pals tied idle Alaska at second with their sixth win in 10 outings.

Ritualo finished with 29 points as he tried to rally the Express down the stretch while Anthony Miller had 23 points and 26 rebounds as FedEx fell to 4-6.

GAMES TODAY
(Balanga)
4 p.m.—Shell vs Purefoods
6:35 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs San Miguel Beer

Tolomia scored 11 points in the second quarter as the Realtors built a 40-13 bubble.

Also a key factor was Ryan Fletcher, who registered a triple-double (15 points, 16 rebounds and 11 assists).

Aquino, who fractured his left hand against Shell more than a week ago, came in plainclothes and watched intently on the sidelines, his spot for four weeks more.

The Barako slipped to 5-5 in a tie with the Turbochargers and the Gin Kings.

Action shifts to the Balanga People's Center in Balanga, Bataan, today with Shell parading a new import when it goes up against Purefoods in the first game.

Melvin Robinson, a 7-foot post-up player from Arizona State University, will beef up the Turbochargers as replacement for Wesley Wilson when they face the TJ Hotdogs.

Coca-Cola will also field an alternate import, the 6-foot-5 Mark Sanford, against San Miguel Beer in the other game. The Tigers sent Darrell Johns home after testing positive for marijuana abuse earlier.

Meanwhile, Ginebra-Quezon City opened its title-retention bid in the Burlington 2005 Junior Basketball League on a high note, blasting Purefoods-Mandaluyong, 88-33, at the Araneta Coliseum yesterday.

The scores:

First Game

STA. LUCIA 99—Espino 28, Tolomia 22, Fletcher 15, Duremdes 13, Omolon 8, Mendoza 7, Santos 6, Calimag 0, Demape 0.

RED BULL 87—Asaytono 26, Johnson 18, Villanueva 12, Tugade 11, Ybañez 8, Valenzuela 8, Ejercito 4, Robinson 0, Bagulo 0, Bernardo 0, Torion 0, Meneses 0, Felhl 0.

Quarters: 29-11, 55-38, 78-68, 99-87

Second Game

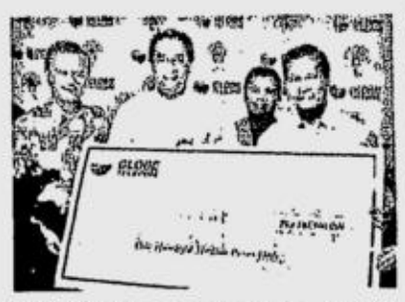
TALK 'N TEXT 102—Honeycutt 24, Alapag 16, Pablo 14, Miller 13, Telan 11, Belano 9, Carey 6, Camaso 5, De Ocampo 4, Ravena 0.

FEDEX 96—Ritualo 29, Miller 23, Pingris 13, Ferriols 11, Arboleda 11, De Ocampo 7, David 2, Gonzales 0, Victolero 0, Billones 0, Codiñera 0.

Quarters: 24-26, 50-44, 73-74, 102-96.

■ New Mourning dawns as Heat take 2-0 edge /A27
■ Harbour Centre tackles Welcoat /A26
■ Globe, Philsoc ink P100-M package /A26

WHAT'S INSIDE



SEABA, SEAG titles in the bag—Reyes

By Musong R. Castillo

OUTSPOKEN and eloquent, one rarely catches Chot Reyes struggling for words.

"I really can't say if welcome (development) is the term," Reyes told the INQUIRER, shortly after learning that he was given the top-to-bottom task of handling the formation of the RP Team to the SEABA on Tuesday night.

"What I know is that I am here to follow the mandate of the (PBA) board first and foremost," Reyes added. "And then be of service to national interest."

From being asked to prepare a national team to a tournament months—and even years—away, Reyes suddenly found a new job landing on his lap.

It was a job not originally his, but one which the powers-that-be believe only he is capable of.

Reyes had just been appointed to at least occupy a consultant's position in the RP five that will play in the SEABA, a low-rated international event that determines the qualifiers from the Southeast Asian region to the bigger Asian championship.

"I have no idea at the moment," Reyes answered, when pressed to at least give some names that he feels are needed in the team. "I will still have to talk to members of the coaching staff and evaluate the field (opponents)."

Reyes said that winning the SEABA and the SEAG gold are sure things with the 20-man pool of Philippine Basketball Association players who will later represent the country in the Asian cagefest.

"But that does not necessarily mean sending an all-pro team to the SEABA, or even the SEA Games," Reyes said. "It's an option, definitely, but one which we still have to evaluate."

RP hopes to pad SEAG medal list

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FROM 388, the Philippines wants to raise the number of gold medals in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games to more than 420 to improve the level of competition as well as boost the country's title campaign.

National sports associations, which have been lobbying to add a few more events in their respective disciplines, stressed the additional competitions could improve the quality of the Nov. 27-Dec. 5 SEA Games.

Bowling association president Steve Hontiveros said the main consideration is enhancing the level of play in all events by accommodating more participants.

"More than improving our chances of winning, we hope to improve the quality of the competitions," said Hontiveros, the SEAG organizing committee secretary general whose association wants to include men's and women's all-events in the SEA program.

HONTIVEROS

Swimming's Mark Joseph pushed for the inclusion of 1-meter synchronized diving.

"Our divers have been doing well internationally in synchronized diving," said Joseph. "It's actually ironic because we have no facility for training so they do it using dry training—a testament to the talent of our divers and the expertise of the coaches."

Among the NSAs gunning for more events are wushu, wrestling, judo, pencak silat and billiards, according to Philsoc Games and Events committee chair Go Teng Kok.

Go said they are going to make the proposal to the SEA Federation executive council today and expressed confidence that their recommendations will be unanimously supported in deference to the host country's request.

The sports disciplines will remain at 41, according to Go, although the events will be jacked up to more than 420 which won't pose a problem since preparations for all the sports disciplines are already in place.

The SEAG Federation meeting will be held at the Hyatt Hotel today although delegates have been arriving since last night.

The Philsoc plans to host a goodwill round of golf among the participants prior to the two-day session.

Castro whips rival, reaches Turkey boxfest quarterfinals

LIGHT FLYWEIGHT Godfrey Castro outclassed his Turkish rival and barged into the medal bouts of the Ahmet Comert International Boxing Championships in Istanbul, Turkey, Monday.

The 20-year-old Castro pummeled Samil of Turkey with sharp combinations right from the start of their bout to score a 17-9 rout and follow light welterweight Mark Jason Melligen in the quarterfinal round.

Castro goes for the semifinal slot and an automatic bronze medal on Tuesday when he faces a Kazakhstan fighter.

Amateur boxing president Manny T. Lopez had earlier instructed Team Philippines to go all out in matches against the Turks following complaints against biased officiating.

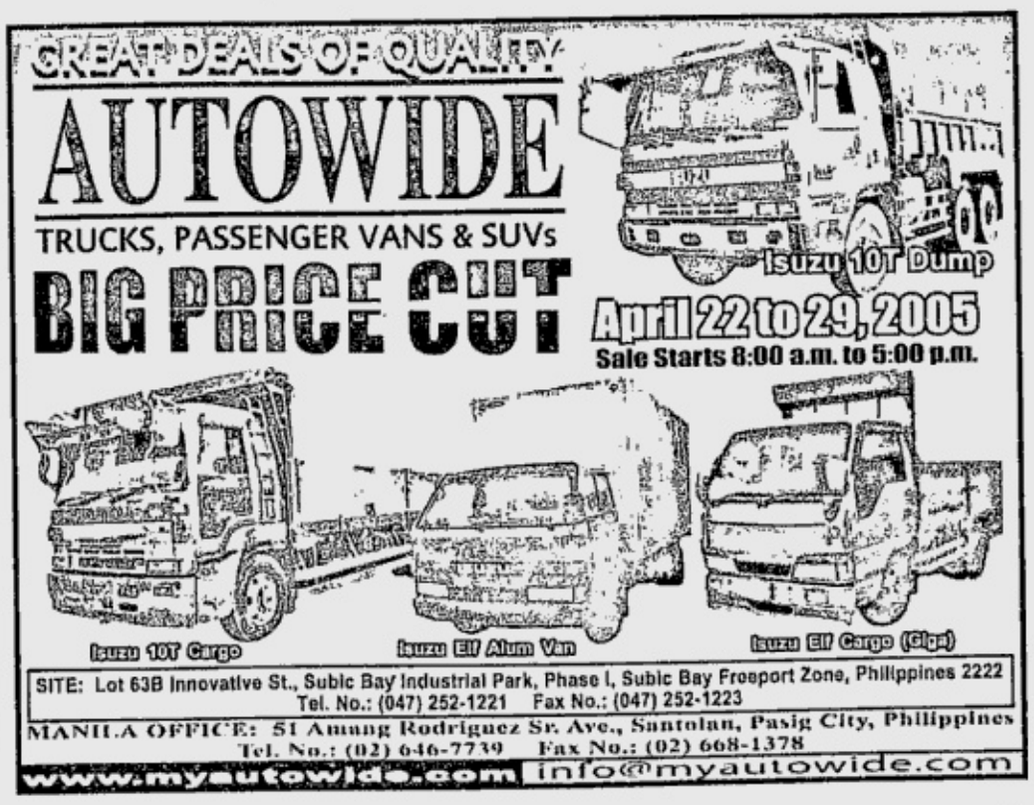
Melligen earlier advanced to the quarterfinals with a 22-10 victory over Hammed of Israel in this world-ranking event which attracted 181 men's boxers and 127 women pugilists from 23 nations.

Melligen goes for a semifinal berth and an automatic bronze medal on Tuesday when he fights Turkey's Sipal in the quarterfinals.

Four other Team Philippines members—bantamweight Joan Tipon, lightweight Genebert Basadre, flyweight Warlito Parrenas and welterweight Reynaldo Galido—bowed out of contention, all losing to fighters from the host country, which fielded five teams.

The participation of the team was made possible by Ginebra San Miguel, the First Gentleman Foundation and Pacific Heights.

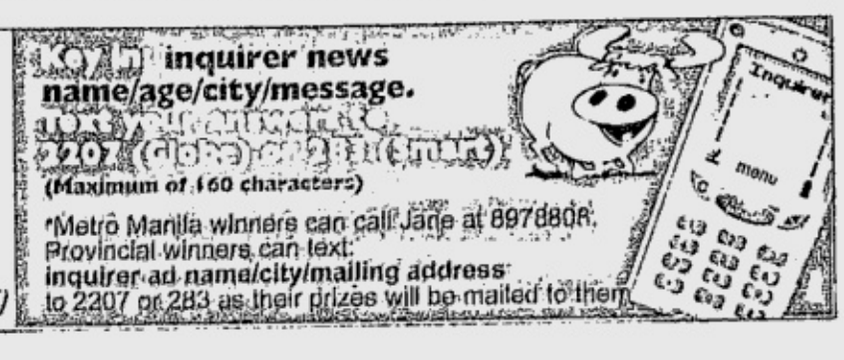
It is a part of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (ABAP) eliminations for the composition of the RP team which will see action in the Manila Southeast Asian Games.



Question of the Week

Do you support the move of leading advertisers to pull out of top showbiz TV talk shows that broadcast sex video scandals?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wil each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! U*



Globe, Philsoc ink ₱100-M package

(FROM left) POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., Globe Telecom president/CEO Gerardo C. Ablaza Jr., and Philsoc chair Roberto Pagdanganan show the symbolic check of P100-M. ROGER MARGALLO

By Musong R. Castillo

GLOBE Telecoms formally became the first non-government backer of the Southeast Asian Games yesterday after inking a P100 million gold package with the Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee.

Top Philsoc honchos Obet Pagdanganan and Jose "Peping" Cojuangco signed the sponsorship agreement with Globe president and CEO Gerardo Ablaza at a posh restaurant in Taguig City.

"We have to take into consideration that this (sponsorship) is not of commercial value, but Globe's patriotic obligation to the country," Cojuangco said.

The packages of Mabuhay-PLDT, San Miguel Corp. and several of taipan Lucio Tan's companies are expected to be signed within the coming weeks to meet the targeted budget of P1 billion to host the Games.

"The significance of Globe coming in (as a gold sponsor) is that they came in when people said it was not possible (to solicit sponsorships of this magnitude) because of the economy," said Pagdanganan.

Pagdanganan added that a total of P637 million in sponsorships, including P300 million coming from President Macapagal-Arroyo's social fund, has been sealed and that the Philsoc is on track toward securing the minimum amount needed for the hosting.

Meanwhile, the POC will welcome members of the SEAG Federation Council today before the crucial final meeting is held tomorrow at the Hyatt along Roxas Boulevard.

The arrival of representatives from Singapore and Malaysia last night will complete the 11-nation group.

High in the SEAGFC agenda is the number of events to be added or discarded, the most crucial thing to the country's aspirations of winning the overall championship.

Cojuangco will take his seat as president of the SEAGFC after Celso Dayrit, the fencing president and former POC chief, resigns at the beginning of the meeting tomorrow.

Cojuangco created the Rules and Sports Committee a couple of weeks ago, giving it the task of coming up with the exact number of events that would help the country in the race for overall supremacy.

The committee's initial report to the POC is that at least 20 NSAs are seeking additional events in their respective sports.

Harbour Centre tackles Welcoat

GAMES TODAY (*Pasig Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Toyota Otis-Letran
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Welcoat

AFTER four straight wins, Harbour Centre coach Tonichi Yturri is starting to see the cohesive team he envisions in the PBL Unity Cup.

"We're now showing teamwork rather than relying on individual skills," said Yturri of the collegiate hotshots comprising his rookie squad. "We now have the poise and composure in our end games."

The Portmasters recently stunned defending champion Magnolia Ice Cream, 71-66, but they'll be in for a rough time again when they face the battle-tested Welcoat Paints at 4 p.m. today at the Pasig Sports Center.

While Welcoat and Harbour Centre vie for solo second, Granny Goose will shoot for its first back-to-back victories against Toyota Otis-Letran at 2 p.m.

Granny Goose, the surprise fourth-place finisher last conference, snapped its three-game losing streak against winless Nenaco-San Beda, 69-57, last Thursday.

Hefty center JR Quiñahan finally delivered with 15 points after dismal performances in Granny Goose's early games.

Jenkins Mesina, too, flashed his deadly form when he led the Portmasters with 21 points against Magnolia. Mesina stepped up in the final quarter after league-leading scorer Mac Cardona, who averages 27 points, struggled with only 11 markers.

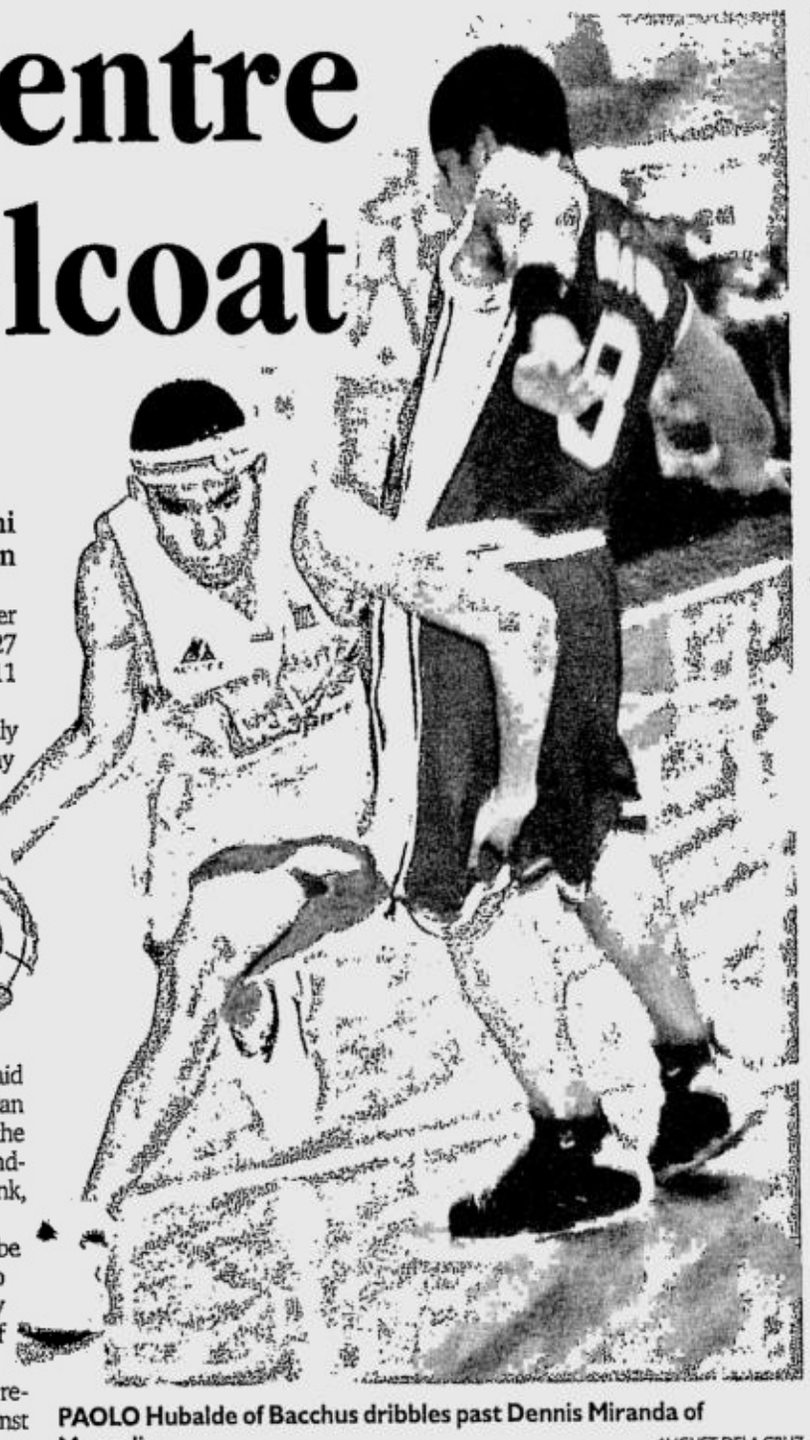
Welcoat, though, will certainly bank on its big men led by Anthony Washington and Marvin Ortiguerra to contain Harbour Centre's hot perimeter shooting.

But aside from the height advantage, the Paintmasters' also boast a deeper bench.

"I just hope they will do the same in our future games," said coach Caloy Garcia after Christian Guevarra scored 16 points off the bench to lead Welcoat's second-stringers past Bacchus Energy Drink, 89-79.

An interesting sidelight will be the match up between the two teams' coaches. Garcia recently replaced Yturri as head coach of St. Benilde in the NCAA.

Toyota Otis-Letran will try to recover from its 74-72 setback against Montaña Jewels. *Jasmine W. Payo*



PAOLO Hubalde of Bacchus dribbles past Dennis Miranda of Magnolia. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SPORTSWATCH

Reyes, Valle head 6-man RP team

EFREN "Bata" Reyes and Gandy Valle will lead a six-man team looking to extend Philippine domination of the third leg of the San Miguel Beer Asian 9-Ball Tour scheduled tomorrow up to May 1 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Leonardo Andam, Christopher Bombita and Ronnie Alcano are the other RP bets. Reyes will be seeded No. 1 based on his victory in the second leg in Jakarta which came on the heels of an earlier win by Valle in the Tour opening leg in Singapore. Organized by ESPN STAR Sports, the event will be aired live on STAR Sports at 5 p.m. tomorrow, 3 p.m. on April 30 and 5 p.m. on May 1. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Monolith claims Boysen Cup title

FAVORED Monolith Construction bested Ironcon Builders, 98-74, yesterday and grabbed the title of the Boysen Paints Cup of the PCF-BL-Aces basketball league at the Tanduay Gym in Quiapo. Finishing the elimination round with a 7-1 win-loss card, Monolith drew solid performances from Romeo Fullente, Boy Geron, Arman Iyana and Jean Paul Olido. Fullente scored 21 points, Geron had 18, while Iyana and Olido added 18 and 14, respectively, thwarting the efforts of Ironcons' Ferdinand Egloso Felix Chavez, Jimmy Pasos and Chris Quilingue, who pooled 45 points. Boysen Paints finished third.

La Salle Greenhills Summer Camp

THE ADVANCE and Team modules of the La Salle Greenhills Summer camp kicks off on Monday, May 2, 1-3:30 p.m. at the La Salle Greenhills Gym. Both classes are open to kids aged 12-17. The Advance module is designed for graduates of LSGH's Beginner 2 and Intermediate 2 courses and for those who possess natural skills and good court sense, while the team camp is an introduction to the concept of teamwork. Registration fee for each class is P2,000 for eight sessions, inclusive of a reversible jersey. For info, call Liza at 722-7717 or 0917-9252451.

NTU Tigers top Cebu taekwondo

THE NTU Tigers dominated the Visayas leg of the Samsung Best-of-the-Best National Taekwondo Championships, winning nine gold medals capped by a near-sweep of the junior women's division at SM Cebu last week. Ma. Daphne Alindogan led the Tigers' golden spree with a win over Melisa Ipil in the finweight division. Flyweight Crystal Reyes, featherweight Elmie Baradas, lightwelter Rubylyn Mapa and middle heavyweight Sarah Jane Javellana followed suit with victories in their respective divisions. Team Cebu City racked up six golds, Iloilo five and Air Force I three golds.

Gatchalian rules Classic kegfest

NATIONAL team member Joonie Gatchalian, with an average of 241.63 pinfalls, topped the qualifying round after 24 games of the Boysen-TBAM Classic Bowling Tournament held at the Powerbowl Bowling Center in Rockwell, Makati recently. Frederick Ong of TBAM Prima and Gilbert Salazar of PBAP Bowlmart placed second and third. They will advance to the semifinal round with 45 others, including Nationals CJ Suarez, Tyrone Ongpauco, Irene Benitez, Ces Yap and Biboy Rivera. Yap Seok Kim (PBAP Bowlmart), Angelo Constantino (PTBA), Michael Robles (PBA), JC Tupaz (TBAM Prima) and Kerwin Law (TBAM) bowled perfect 300 games in the bowlfest.

TENNIS CHAMPS Joanne Opulencia and Louise Lopez, both of Paref-Woodrose in Muntinlupa, emerged as NCR overall champions in the intermediate level doubles tennis event in the NCR Palaro 2005.

Samahang Plaridel golfest today

THE 1ST Samahang Plaridel invitational golf tournament fires off today at the Intramuros golf course. Tee-off is 7 a.m. Invited to grace the ceremonial tee-off are Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino and Philippine Tourism Authority Administrator Robert Dean Barbers. With them will be Samahang Plaridel officers led by Maximo V. Soliven, chair; Neal H. Cruz, vice chair; and Rolando G. Estabillo, president. The 18-hole event is sponsored by Pagcor and SM Group of Companies to raise funds for Samahang Plaridel projects. For details, call 5233335/52333367.

NCA 7-Cock Derby finals tonight

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby championship round gets underway at 4 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum. From 36 entries last Tuesday, 29 qualified for today's finale. The pacesetters are led by Jaen Col VGB of Ellan Nagano, VGB Excalibur of Vice Gov. Boyet Joson, Jimafer JVLET PBRJ II of Jun and Rudy Jingco, Lucky Rin II Firefly Binangonan of Rene Medina, Swing MGM SMRC II of Tony Tan, RT 114 Sabong Bulalayaw I of Ruel Ricafort and PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin I of Pol Estrellado.

JVC BADMINTON: Hideyuki Takato (third from left), president of JVC (Phils.), Inc., leads the ceremonial serve of the JVC Regional Badminton Championships at the Metro Sports Badminton Club in Cebu City. (From left) Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau chair Patrick Gregorio, Kazue Salud, GM of JVC (Phils.), Inc., Cebu City Vice Mayor Michael Rama, Cebu Sports Commission chair Jonathan Guardo and Richard King, president of MSBC.

De Guzman ties Superal for lead

EIGHT of the 12 divisions have been virtually decided and it's all up to Tonton Asistio, Jik Jik Abdon and Miguel Tabuena to get themselves into the winners roster as the Samsung Jungolf Tour's Junior World qualifying tournament heads to its final round at the Sherwood Hills Golf and Country Club course in Trece Martires, Cavite.

The day's most anticipated battle, however, will be in girls Class B where Regan de Guzman and Crystal Faith Superal will tee off all square with no one else close enough to challenge them.

Asistio finally found the game to grab the lead from a resurgent Miko Yee as he fired a two-under-par 70 to storm ahead by five strokes in boys Class A. Asistio, posting a 358 total, drew level at the turn and pulled away, coming home to put himself on the brink of an expected victory as Yee soared to a 77 for 363.

Abdon matched par 72 for 384 to widen his lead to four strokes over Adrian Woo (74-388), while Tabuena scored a 66-335 to hold on to a two-shot advantage over reigning Junior World champion JR Gonzales (67-337) in the tourney also sponsored by Philippine Airlines and Unilever.

Top finishers in each class will make up the country's delegation to the Junior World championships in San Diego, California this July.

The scores after four rounds:

Class A: Boys: 358 Tonton Asistio 70, 363 Mico Yee 77, 369 Mico Alejandro 71; Girls: 408 Bambee dela Paz 78, 421 Linnel de Villa 85, 429 Kathleen Uy 82; Class B: Boys: 384 JikJik Abdon 72, 388 Adrian Woo 74, 405 Jordan Mamaril 84; Girls: 380 Crystal Superal 76, Regan de Guzman 70, 386 Cyna Rodriguez 77; Class C: Boys: 356 Wolen Superal 70, 397 Marcel Puyat 80, 405 Remo Fueg 79; Girls: 372 Dottie Ardina 76, 408 Maan Legaspi 85, 428 Angela de Villa 90; Class D: Boys: 335 Miguel Tabuena 66, 337 JR Gonzales 67, 344 Bino dela Paz 77; Girls: 357 Christina Potenciano 76, 384 Andie Unson 71, 396 Ereina Gabasa 73; Class E: Boys: 292 AR Ramos 60, 307 Tonton Arevalo 61, 320 Miggy Yee 64; Girls: 333 Princess Superal 64, 396 Dana Gonzales 82; Class F: Boys: 459 Ryan Monsalve 90, 513 Zowie Nieves 103, 518 Mikael Robles 91; 341 Abegail Arevalo 70, 357 Janella Buen 72, 360 Lois Kaye Go 67.

Birth of a lethal trio

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

BETTER than never.

That's how I view the final decision on how the national quintet would be formed. Or, to be precise, who would compose the Philippine team to the Seaba and SEA Games basketball competitions.

Finally, the pros and amateurs will play together for country and flag.

It's not the most ideal setup, but I'll take that just the same. At least we are making progress. And besides, competition in both the Seaba and SEA Games might not really be that tough that a combination of the pros and amateurs would be just enough to secure the gold medals.

Whereas before, when the PBA players were allowed only to play in the quadrennial Asian Games, today, that stupidity has ended. It would seem the move to mix pros with amateurs for campaigns of gold in international jousts would be in the right direction.

We are a basketball country that's why we teem with talents. Seeing our pros playing alongside our amateurs might even be a spectacle and a feast to the eyes.

Admittedly, the PBA players are the best in the land.

Admittedly, too, those playing outside the PBA, particularly the young ones, will soon join their PBA elders and eventually become the best players in the land.

It's a cycle that can't be stopped. You can't make the amateurs better than the pros. The pros are the best or they won't be called that.

It's a truism that can't be reversed. You can't make the amateurs first class outright; they need to pass through the rites. Always, it's the pros that are idolized more than the amateurs.

But yes, it's nice to know that things are moving positively now on the basketball front, unlike before when factionalism divided the basketball landscape.

We are a basketball country once more, not just in words but also in deeds.

There are quarters expressing concern over a perceived encroachment by the Philippine Olympic Committee on the autonomous nature of a national sports association (NSA). They say the BAP, an NSA, had just been "taken over" by the POC through its president Peping Cojuangco.

Their fears are with merit. There could be some "trespassing" there.

However, there's no concrete proof of upheaval by internal forces that should tend to undermine the officialdom within the BAP.

No one's being kicked out of office.

No one's being accused of, nor charged with, mismanagement.

What Peping Cojuangco did was to gather all basketball-loving forces to include both BAP officials and so-called stakeholders, in the process forming a committee to oversee basketball operations in the wake of two forthcoming tournaments of international import—the Seaba and SEA Games caging.

I believe Peping's move does not constitute meddling on the affairs of an NSA.

In the first place, the BAP is not crying foul.

In the second place, Peping Cojuangco has not ordered a snap election in the BAP.

If there's anything wrong in Peping Cojuangco's move, the BAP officialdom should have been running quick to the Fiba now and accusing the POC head of railroading operations in the amateur basketball backyard.

So, to the disturbed forces, just relax. What's happening right now is not a revolution-in-waiting within the confines of the BAP but an evolution in basketball that should even redound to the benefit of the BAP itself.

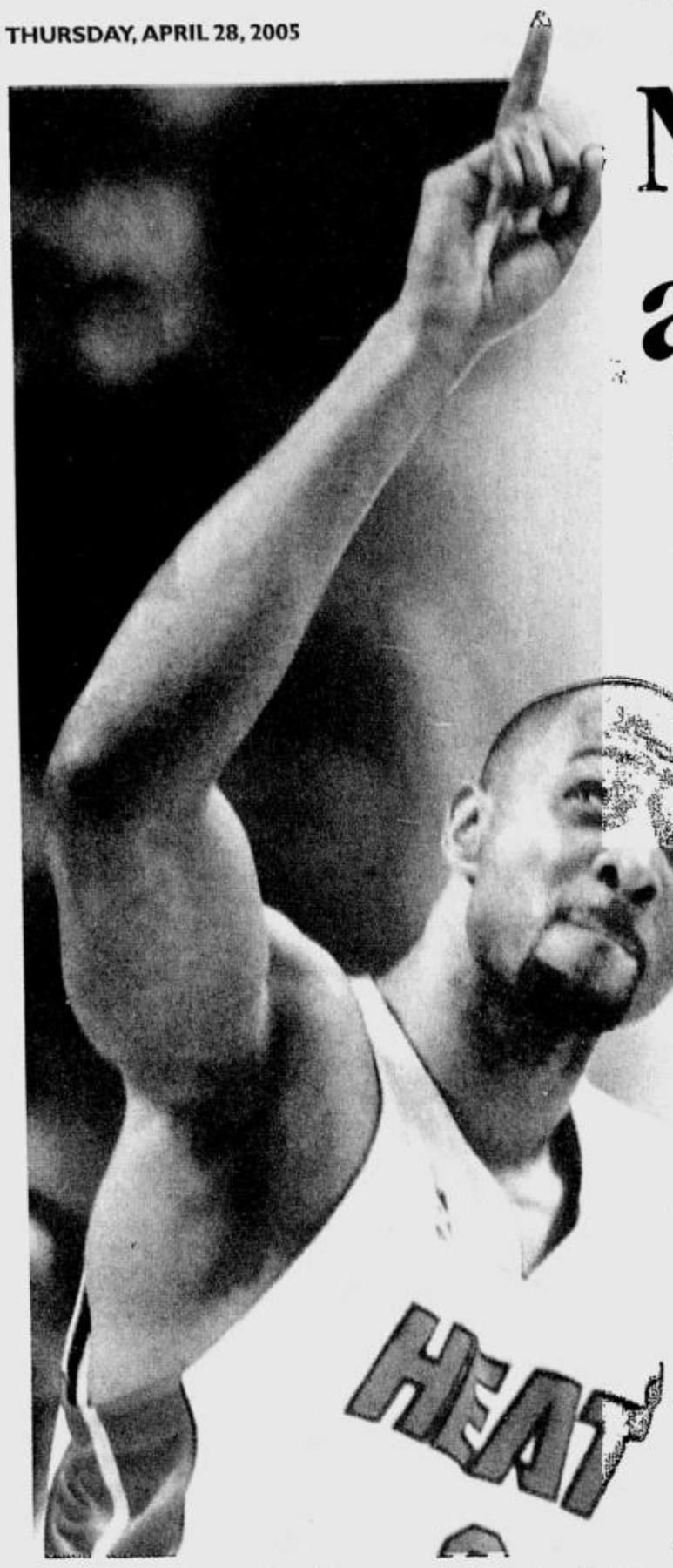
Order is being slowly restored in the most important NSA in the country and we should all applaud.

I salute the PBA for finally swinging its doors totally open, making possible the birth of a lethal trio in basketball: PBA, BAP and POC.

Thus, it's not just the Asian Games now but also once more the ABC. Plus, yes, the prospects of a much sought after stint in the World Championship. And, should things turn out right again, a return to the Olympic Games after an absence of 36 years.

We can dream big again, fellas.

New Mourning dawns as Heat take 2-0 edge



ALONZO Mourning says he only has one goal this season—to help Miami become the No. 1 team in the NBA. REUTERS

MIAMI—Alonzo Mourning nailed a season-high 21 points and snared nine rebounds as the Miami Heat thumped the New Jersey Nets, 104-87, on Tuesday to take a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference quarterfinal series.

The best-of-seven series now shifts to New Jersey for Game Three on Thursday, with the Nets in desperate need of win.

It was a frustrating night for the Nets, who did a solid job controlling the Heat's two all-stars, holding Shaquille O'Neal to 14 points and Dwyane Wade to 17.

But an inspired Mourning, who began the season in New Jersey before demanding a trade, stepped in to take up the slack, making several big baskets and keying pivotal runs.

"I have been working my whole career for one goal and that's to win a championship," the 35-year-old Mourning said.

"The Hulk carried Superman today," O'Neal said.

As in Game One, the Nets made a quick start in racing to a 7-0 lead before the Heat gained control, 48-39, at the break.

After intermission, the Heat turned up the pressure, with Mourning hitting the final eight points in a 19-8 third quarter run as Miami extended their advantage to 72-52.

Eddie Jones and Damon Jones contributed 14 points each to the Heat cause while Nenad Krstic paced the Nets with a playoff career-high 27 points for New Jersey.

Vince Carter chipped in with 21 points for the Nets with Richard Jefferson adding 14 and Jason Kidd 10.

'Amped' Wallace

In Auburn Hills, Richard Hamilton poured in 23 points and Chauncey Billups added 20 as the defending champions Detroit Pistons rolled to a 99-84 win over the Philadelphia 76ers, taking a 2-0 series lead.

Rasheed Wallace contributed 15 points for the Pistons and Antonio McDyess provided another stellar effort coming off the bench adding 12 points, eight rebounds and three blocked shots.

Wallace had 11 points in the fourth period, apparently sparked by a technical foul slapped on him.

"That definitely amps him up. He lives for that," teammate Chauncey Billups said. "He doesn't try to get those technicals on purpose, but it's kind of funny that when he gets them, he gets a little more energy and a little more motivation.

"We don't like when he gets those technicals, but we like what happens afterward."

The series now shifts to Philadelphia where the 76ers will try to erase a 2-0 series deficit for the first time in franchise history.

NBA scoring champion Allen Iverson had an off night, hitting just 19 points and dishing out 10 assists.

Chris Webber added 15 points and Samuel Dalembert had 14 points and 11 rebounds as the 76ers shot just 7-of-24 from the field.

"It's been tough. It's been rough," Iverson said. "We just can't stop them. We have to come up with something—some new scheme, some new idea."

The Pistons led by six points at the half but slowly took control after the intermission, extending their lead to 93-71 with just over three minutes to play as they eased to their sixth straight home playoff victory.

Seattle, 2-0

In Seattle, Ray Allen had 26 points and Jerome James added 19 points and nine rebounds as the SuperSonics held off a late comeback bid by the Sacramento Kings to claim a 105-93 win and a 2-0 lead in their Western Conference best-of-seven quarterfinal series.

The series now shifts to Sacramento for Game Three on Friday.

Rashard Lewis added 12 points for Seattle, while Vladimir Radmanovic had 10.

"We wanted to protect homecourt so we came out aggressive," James said. "It resulted in a victory.

FIRED up by a technical foul, Detroit's Rasheed Wallace comes up huge for the Pistons. REUTERS

"We held on and played good defense. Defense wins championships."

Bobby Jackson had 17 points in a losing effort for the Kings, with Mike Bibby contributing 16 points and eight assists.

The SuperSonics stamped their authority on the contest in the third quarter, outscoring the Kings 33-18 to take control, 88-62, and weathering a late Kings rally. *Reuters, AP*

Atienza eyes lifting MYG to next level

By Marc Anthony Reyes

RIDING the crest of the successful staging of the Manila Youth Games, the Manila Sports Council yesterday bared plans to hold a nationwide sports meet for in and out of school children in September at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Patterned after the shelved Batang Pinoy, the MYG national invitational will hold its inaugural edition on Sept. 28-Oct 2 initially with five key sports disciplines on its calendar, according to Masco chair Ali Atienza.

Atienza said the national invitational hopes to gather at least 3,000 young athletes to compete in athletics, aquatics, taekwondo, football and Little League softball in a bid to help discover new talents in the Big City as well as in the countryside.

The meet will be exclusive for kids aged 10 to 17, enrolled or not, which distinguishes itself from the school-based Palarong Pambansa, which is being revived this year in Iloilo City next month.

"For starters we only prepared for five events and hopefully we can expand in the next few years," said Atienza, who is credited for pooling 12,000 children from the nation's capital to take part in the 12-sport MYG.

Atienza also announced incentives that will be given to outstanding athletes of the recent 4th MYG, on top of being seeded to the Palaro.

Malate of District 5 wound up the overall champion of the week-long meet with 49 golds, 41 silvers and 42 bronzes, most of them coming from taekwondo which won for them 29 gold medals.

Atienza, a former Asian taekwondo champion, said Masco plans to put the MYG to the next level by holding the invitational. Manila has been perennial favorites in the Batang Pinoy, which has not been held for the past two years already.

Bouyed by the Philippine Columbian Association swimmers, Pandacan copped second place overall with a tally of 32-21-26 with 15 of the golds coming from the pool.

Five adventurers win Utah tickets

AFTER three days of full-contact, outdoor activity known as the Marlboro Adventure Team (MAT) national finals held recently in Tagaytay, five Filipinos will get a chance to complete a dream sequence when they head for Moab, Utah, and join other adventurers from all over the world in the ultimate face-off among man, machine and Mother Nature.

Representing Team Philippines to Moab are Reggie Casallos, 26, of Laguna; Wesley Chiongbian, 27, Cebu; Symonette Lim, 27, Manila; John Valiente, 29, Nueva Ecija; and Jun Aguilar, 33, Nueva Ecija.

They were picked out from 50 participants in the MAT national finals in the Adventure Camp in lush Napayun

Island in Tagaytay. The 50-man field emerged from a record 300,000 applicants this year.

"I signed up last year but I didn't even get a call," Valiente said. But he gave it another chance and the outcome was much sweeter the second time around.

"To make it to the finals is one thing, but to get a chance to go to Moab, it's unbelievable. The whole experience is something you'll cherish for the rest of your life."

"When I saw that we were only a few women in the national finals, I felt that slim *lang ang* chance *ko* to make it," said Lim, the only female who earned a trip to Utah. "Being a part of this, it'll take a while before it sinks in."

"It's the 10th year we've been doing the MAT and it's been the most successful so far," said Chris Nelson, managing director of Phillip Morris Philippines Inc. "The contestants who come back, they tell their stories. And that's where the broad appeal comes from, we build from that excitement and that encourages more people to try on the MAT."

"The secret of the MAT's success is in the campaign itself. It's rooted in Marlboro Country," said Marlboro brand manager Jasper Evangelista. "We doubled the finalists to 50 this year because we wanted more people to know what the experience is like."

LONE female qualifier Symonette Lim, Reggie Casallos, Wesley Chiongbian, John Valiente and Jun Aguilar emerge from a pool of 300,000 to make this year's Marlboro Adventure Team to Moab. Flanking them are Chris Nelson (right), managing director of Phillip Morris Philippines Inc., and Jasper Evangelista, brand manager of Marlboro.

And they're the ordinary people, the kind you see everyday.

This year's set of Moab finalists—which include an education consultant, a nursing student, a computer programmer, an area-sales manager, and a veterinarian—is proof of that.

"I never even imagined that my application form would even be accepted," Chiongbian, the student, said. "I've never won raffles and contests in my life. But now this?"

The competitions listed on the MAT menu included driving all-terrain vehicles and 4x4s; swimming some 200 meters and boat-flipping in noontime heat; two-hour trekking, orienteering and mountaineering on arid weather; and arguably the toughest challenge of all—rappelling down 250 ft off a vertical rock cliff.

None among the five have gone through a course that combined challenges that tested the limits of mind and body as well as invigorating recreation that enriched the human spirit.

From medical supervisors who were round-the-clock and strategically positioned around the area to the course experts who, according to Casallos, "were patient and made learning easier," the MAT has become the ideal playground for those who want to break through their comfort zones

"From the gear to the food to hotel accommodations, it was perfect. The way they took care of us, at one point, you wished the experience never ended," Casallos added.

Casallos and company get to relive that experience and more when they fly off to Utah.

"What we showed them here is just a glimpse of what they'll see in Moab," Evangelista added.

"The grandeur of what they'll see in Utah, it's nature at its finest."

Sta. Elena, Tagaytay LFL finals set today

STA. ELENA hosts Tagaytay Highlands today in the opening half of their home-and-away duel for the Ladies Federation League title.

With a Sta. Elena squad whose frontliners have been playing together for years battling Tagaytay Highlands, considered as a ragtag squad formed only weeks before the tournament, it's a showdown that is certainly the least expected.

Sta. Elena disposed of Manila Southwoods in the semifinals while Highlands showed no mercy to Orchard in earning the other finals berth of the tourney organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc. and sponsored by Prudential Bank, Justine Sebastian/Cathay Land Inc., Citibank NA and Schering Plough-Coppertone.

The finals move to Tagaytay for the final half of the finals tomorrow.

While Sta. Elena definitely has a deeper bench, Tagaytay will be counting on a newfound confidence after strong results in their last three outings, including sweeps against elimination topnotcher Orchard.

The pairings will not be known until Sta. Elena team captain Cora Suntay and Tagaytay skipper Sandy Prieto-Romualdez submit their lineups minutes before the three formats (alternate shots, high-low and aggregate) are played.

Suntay, however, will likely field duty reliables like low-handicapper Therese Dabao, Rio Co and Nancy Co while Prieto-Romualdez will be counting on junior players, sisters Linnel and Debbie de Villa.

RP golf may lose Murakami for SEA Games

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINES could lose a possible national golf team stalwart for the coming Southeast Asian Games if Artemio Murakami, the former RP Amateur champion, hurdles the Japanese Tour Q school.

"It's time to move on and test my game against the best players in Asia," Murakami told the INQUIRER in an exclusive telephone conversation late Monday night.

From the Japanese Tour, Murakami, who anchored Southwoods to a second Philippine Interclub men's title more than a month ago in Bacolod, said that he would try his luck in the Asian Tour in January.

"I'm turning 22 this year and I feel that this is the time to do it (turn pro)," Murakami said. "As young as I am, I don't like to stay an amateur for a long time. I want to compete at the top level."

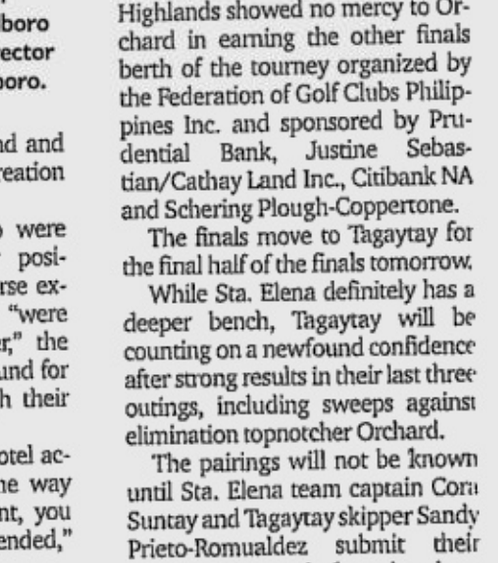
The Philippines will host the SEAG in November with golf staking a total of four gold medals, two each in the men's and ladies' division.

Murakami is acknowledged as No. 2 behind top amateur Juvic Pagunsan who had earlier said he's abandoning the national team and turning pro due to what he said was shabby treatment from the National Golf Association of the Philippines.

The son of a Japanese businessman, whose murder several years ago remained unsolved up to now, Murakami said he owes his development as a player through the help of Southwoods and its owner John Sobrepeña.

The youngest RP amateur champion when he won in 1999 at 15 years old, Murakami, also a Japanese passport holder, said that he is not closing the door entirely to what could only be his second stint for the Philippines—in the SEAG.

"I also want to play for the country, no doubt," Murakami said. "I played in the World Am (last year) and though I didn't perform particularly well, I was proud of wearing the Philippine colors."

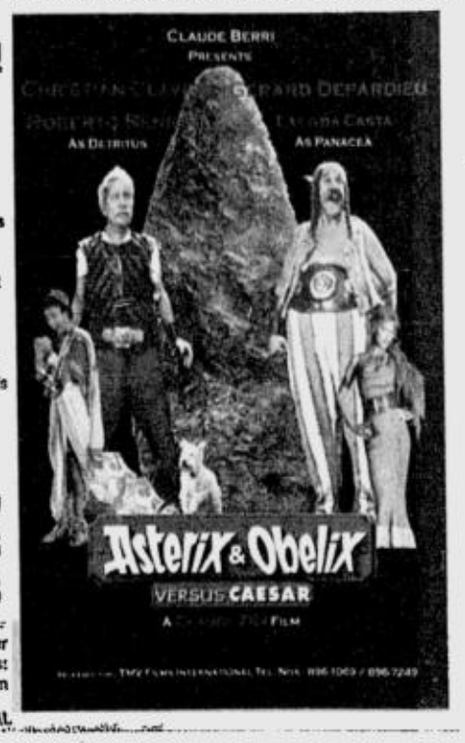


MURAKAMI: Japan-bound? PDI PHOTO

France's favorite funny heroes in live-action movie!

Asterix & Obelix VERSUS CAESAR

In this film, *Caesar* gives *Delirius* an ultimatum: find a way to conquer the Gauls or he'll find his way inside the stomach of the lions. *Delirius* comes up with a plan to kidnap *Getafix the Druid*, creator of the magic potion which enables the Gauls to be temporarily invincible. Meanwhile, the Romans' tax collection chest winds up in the village and con-man *Prolix* is out to trick them all. Obelix is in love with *Panacea* who loves someone else. A new magic potion is developed with "double" the punch. The Roman centurion X'mas Bonus once again reluctantly sends his soldiers to do battle with the Gauls (he knows he's bound to lose, anyway). Betrayals, battles, and funny escapades abound! And where is Asterix in all this? You'll just have to watch how everyone's favorite Gaul will save the day!



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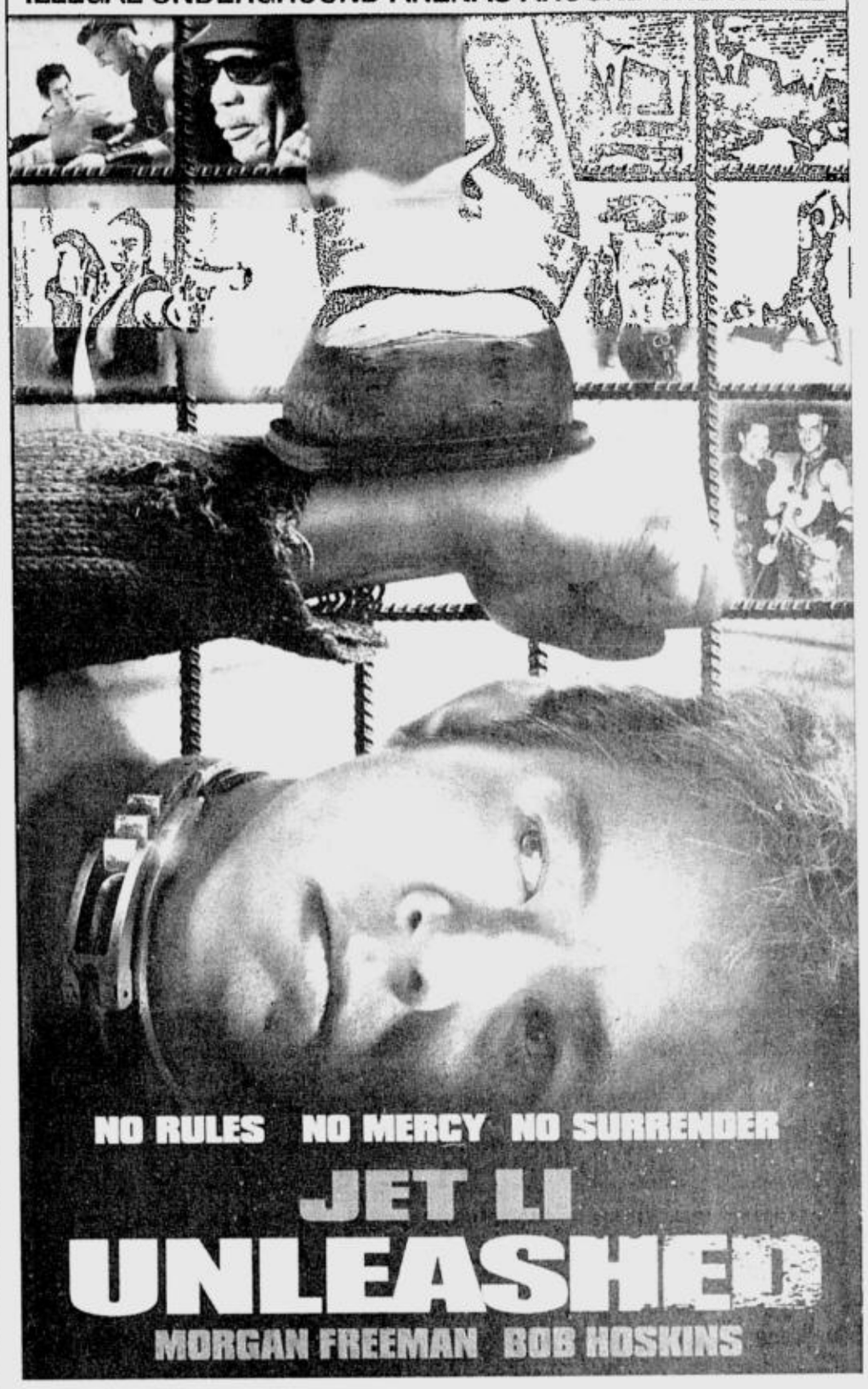

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JET LI
UNLEASHED
MORGAN FREEMAN BOB HOSKINS

SHOW TIME

KITCHIE Nadal

Kitchie in Bikini Summit

KITCHIE Nadal is one of the guest performers at the Mossimo Bikini Summit on April 30, 8 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Other guests are Grace Nono, Ella May Saison, DJ Mike of Akafellas, Pido, Jimmy Bondoc, the all-male group Royal Rhythm Force, violinist Jerome Nunez and Victories Regalario, the Sun Valley Crew, singing champions Rachelle Ann Go and Frenchie Dy, opera singer Duds Santiago of Cast & Crew, producer and organizer of the annual event.

Call 911-5555 for tickets.

Tonight

Pilita Corrales and German Moreno at "Love in April," a fund-raising concert for street children at the Music Museum, 8 p.m. Call 825-9020.

Silk at Dusit Hotel Nikko, Thursdays.

Fat 4 with Freshmen band at Ratsky Morato.

Nyoy Volante w/ Mannos at Suburbia in Malate.

John Y Cash and The Jukebox at Funnside, Timog Ave., QC.

Tomorrow

Lito Camo takes center stage in "Lagi na Lang Kayo... Ako Naman!" at the Music Museum, 8:30 p.m. Call 891-9999.

Southborder live at Metrobar, West Avenue, 8 p.m. Call 925-8833

Bedazzled II at Club Mwah! every Friday and Saturday, 10:30 p.m. Call 535-7943.

Rockin' Revival at Funnside, Timog Ave., Q.C.

Lucid Band at Taste Buds Robinsons Place Manila, 7 p.m.

Acoustic Jive at Merk's.

Rachelle Ann Go in concert at Aliw Theater with Mark Bautista, Christian Bautista, Jay-R and Ogie Alcasid as special guests; 8 p.m. Call 911-5555

Fat Session at the Tavern on the Square in Greenbelt 2 Makati.

April 30

Monique Wilson celebrates 25 years in theater with an anniversary concert at the Music Museum. Call 896-6695.

Southborder and Silk in the concert and fashion show, "Heat Wave" at the Krua Thai Parking Lot, Macapagal Ave. corner Edsa Extension, Pasay City; 7:30 p.m.

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3 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 (DOLBY) GUESS WHO GP

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6 GOLD (SDDS) PACIFIER
7 GOLD (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
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2 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION
3 SAHARA
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 THE INTERPRETER

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4 SAMARA (RING 2)

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2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DTS) KAULAYAW
4 GUESS WHO
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2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 (SDDS) SAHARA
4 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE

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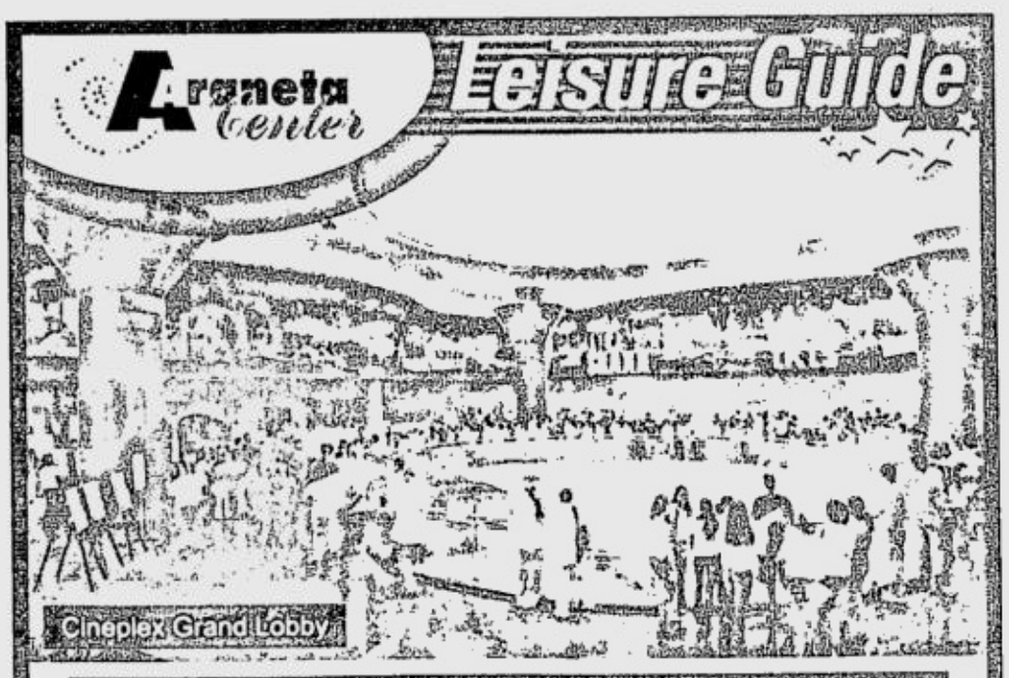
Araneta Center Leisure Guide



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1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION
3 SAHARA
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 THE INTERPRETER
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MOSSIMO BIKINI SUMMIT 2005
April 30, Saturday, 8pm
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 1
4:15 pm Alaska vs. Coke / 6:35pm Shell vs. Ginebra
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 4
4:45 pm Coke vs. Purefoods / 7:35pm Talk n' Text vs. Red Bull
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 6
4:45 pm Red Bull vs. Shell / 7:35pm Talk n' Text vs. Coke

CENTER EVENTS
ALI MALL WILD & WACKY SUMMER
3-Day Mallwide Sale April 29, 30 & May 1
New Age Fitness Center Summer Workshops 3-4pm, April 28, 29 & 30
Ali Idol Singing Contest 4:30-6pm, April 29, 30 & May 1
Bio-Research Pet Exhibit 3-4pm, May 1

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Running gags and comic set-ups

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE CAUGHT the first telecast last Saturday at 9 p.m. of ABC-5's revised "Wow Mali" gag show, now retitled "Wow, Maling Mali." The title change suggest an intensification of the show's comedic salvos, but the program itself was pretty much (monkey) business as usual, with the main adjustment consisting of having some studio segments interspersed with the usual street comedy.

The studio portion was a running-gag spoof of a rival channel's morning program, with **Joey de Leon** impersonating that show's host.

This puzzled us, because Joey is the more veteran and more popular TV star so it should have been the morning show's host spoofing Joey, not the other way around.

Anyway, the episode concentrated on interviewing a male star preference. The star in question was portrayed as a flaming fairy, so the inference was that the "real" star being spoofed was similarly gay-a catty suggestion that the show found outrageously funny.

Trouble was, every time the show cut back to the studio interview, it was more of the same, until the spoof's humor quotient was pretty much exhausted.

The program's street scenes were more productively funny. One of them was a challenge to a young man to stand beside a traffic enforcer and imitate everything he did. Of course, the traffic enforcer got mad and called a cop to take a the young man to a police precinct.

Just as the young man started to freak out, it was revealed to him that both the traffic enforcer and the cop were in on the challenge from the very start, and the young man breathed a huge sigh of relief!

The best scene was a much more complicated set-up in which the mother of a young man was made to believe that he had gotten a female starlet pregnant. The mother got increasingly stressed out as she was made to believe that she would have to foot the bill for everything.

She really freaked out when a TV crew arrived to interview the starlet about her pregnancy, and she cast aspersions on her boyfriend's far from luxurious lifestyle.

His mother was fit to be tied when she heard this, so the show decided to put an end to her misery by revealing that the whole nightmarish experience was a set-up.

Of course, the mother initially got mad when she learned that she had been had! In time, however, she forgave her conniving family members, and ended up laughing at herself.

Feedback

From **Paul R. Mortel** of Marikina City: "I don't pretend to be proficient in the English language, but I think there is something wrong in the advertising slogan of the Dept. of Tourism. It says 'I Love Philippines.' I think it lacks the article *the* it should read 'I Love the Philippines.'"

Goodbye to . . .

From page A32

never giving up on me."

The Valencianos said: "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh. We are privileged to have been part a great lady's life and mission."

Gary V added: "She was behind almost every inspirational song that I recorded in the country, beginning from 'Take Me Out of the Dark.' Her rewards and crowns in heaven will surprise her."

As Pari chair, Tan was indefatigable in anti-piracy activities, and joined actual raids. She spearheaded the revival of Awit Awards.

Pari executive director Ronald Aniceto could not believe the news of Tan's demise. "Bella Tan was one of the reasons that the music industry is back on its feet today," Aniceto said.

Tan also championed the rights of singers and musicians to royalty payments.

Through the Filipino Society of Composers and Authors of the Philippines (Filscap) and Bella's vigorous intercession, many Pinoy artists are now receiving long overdue royalties.

Filscap president and noted composer/producer Nonoy Tan acknowledged Tan as his "teacher" in the business. "I learned the ropes from her," he said. "She was generous in sharing her broad knowledge, and I will be forever thankful."

During her last years as managing director of Universal Records, Bella was focused on developing and producing new artists. She took under her wing Jerome John Hughes, Rizza Navales and Jeffrey Hidalgo, the company's new crop of contract stars.

She worked very closely with Ito Rapadas, A&R (artists and repertoire) manager for Original Pilipino Music. Rapadas also said Tan was his mentor. "She developed my skills as a music producer after my stint as Neocolours vocalist in 1994. She basically taught me to appreciate the musical ear of the masses. She thoroughly loved her work—to develop artists and share their work with the public."

Karylle says . . .

From page A32

nounced that they were "together" on April 19, during a media visit to the set of "Encantadia." Reports about them being an item had been circulating since February, after a much-talked about production number on "SOP Rules."

On the show, Dingdong and Karylle locked lips for a whole minute at the end of their dance number.

"That wasn't a spur-of-the-moment thing. *Utos 'yun* (it was an order)," Karylle confessed.

"We've done a lot of things for our love team *na inutos*," added Dingdong.

"What's funny was that after that incident people were so convinced that we're really together that I asked myself, 'what was it that they see that I can't see.' Because at that time, *hindi ko pa naman siya gusto*," Karylle explained. "Now, they say we're lying, *na* gimmick *lang ito*. Why would I lie about it?"

Overwhelmed

Karylle said she is overwhelmed with people's reaction toward her relationship with Dingdong. "I get greetings from people I really don't know. They're so happy. I've never experienced anything like it. It's all very touching."

Meanwhile, Dingdong said he has received both positive and negative reactions from people. "*Mas madami ang* good," he said, "and these messages came from people who really matter to me."

Karylle said her father, dentist Modesto Tatlonghari, was pleased himself. "He welcomes it. But of course, *may* guidance *pa rin* from him, and from my mom."

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3 CAN THIS BE LOVE — MTRCB: GP — P120.00 — 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
4 GUESS WHO — MTRCB: PG-13 — 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50
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CANTHIS BE LOVE — GP — 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
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starmall EDSA — Tel. No. 726.61.50: 3 Paraiso; 4 Can This Be Love; 5 XXX 2; Kids Salon and Fashion Show, Starmall Edsa Apr 30 Saturday, 2nd Level Food Court, 4pm
Metropolis Alabang — Tel. No. 850.42.85: 1 Ring of Nibelungs; 2 Paraiso; 3 Under Renovation; 4 Under Renovation; 5 XXX 2; 6 Can This Be Love
starmall ALABANG — Tel. No. 874.43.99: 1 Sahara; 2 Rental Reservation; Star Model Search (Screening) at Metropolis Alabang, April 29-30 2pm

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GALLERIA

1 XXX 2 • THX	6 SAMARA RING 2
2 XXX 2	7 SAHARA
3 GUESS WHO?	8 THE JACKET
4 THE INTERPRETER	9 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 THE WEDDING DATE	10 THE PACIFIER

ERMITA

1 XXX 2	
2 SAHARA	5 THE WEDDING DATE
3 THE JACKET	6 THE INTERPRETER
4 GUESS WHO?	7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

METRO EAST

1 SAHARA	5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 BOSO	6 THE INTERPRETER
3 THE JACKET	7 GUESS WHO?
4 THE WEDDING DATE	8 XXX 2

NOVALICHES

1 XXX 2	5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 THE JACKET	6 XXX 2
3 THE INTERPRETER	7 RESERVE
4 GUESS WHO?	8 RESERVE

PIONEER

1 XXX 2	3 THE INTERPRETER
2 GUESS WHO?	4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

CITISQUARE MALABON — CAINTA

1 THE WEDDING DATE	1 XXX 2
2 CURSED	2 SAHARA
3 HOSTAGE	3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 PARAISO	4 PARAISO

Boso is the first digital film by DIGITAL VIVA and is directed by the award-winning director, JON RED

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Starring:
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Rated R-18 by MTRCB

STA. ROSA — LIPA

1 XXX 2	1 XXX 2
2 SAMARA RING 2	2 BOOGEYMAN
3 GUESS WHO?	3 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
4 OK KA, PARE KO	4 SAMARA RING 2
5 ASTERIX AND OBELIX	5 HOSTAGE

DASMARINAS — ANGELES

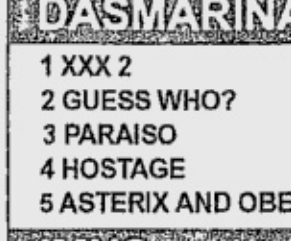
1 XXX 2	1 XXX 2
2 GUESS WHO?	2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 PARAISO	3 SAMARA RING 2
4 HOSTAGE	4 OK KA, PARE KO
5 ASTERIX AND OBELIX	

IMUS — STARMILLS

1 XXX 2	1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 PARAISO	2 SAMARA RING 2
3 ASTERIX AND OBELIX	3 PARAISO
4 CURSED	4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 BOSO	5 XXX 2
6 SAHARA	6 XXX 2

BACOLOD — ILOILO

1 XXX 2	1 XXX 2
2 THE PACIFIER	2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 XXX 2	3 THE PACIFIER
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2	4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
5 SAMARA RING 2	5 HIDE AND SEEK
6 BOOGEYMAN	6 SAMARA RING 2



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ALABANG TOWN CENTER

AYALA CENTER CEBU

AYALA MALLS LoveMall!

AYALA CENTER — April 21 & 22 6:30 pm; April 23 & 24 11:30 am, 3pm & 6pm; Glorietta Activity Center

ALABANG TOWN CENTER — April 29, 30 & May 1, 3pm & 6pm, Activity Center

AYALA CENTER CEBU — May6 to 8, 11 am & 6pm, Activity Center

TOWER RECORDS LoveMall!

Catch Lilo's summer musical show live at the Ayala Malls featuring Ben Binene as LILO Chynna Ortaleza and Nadine Samonte as NANI Dion Ignacio and Tyrone Perez as DAVID Paul Salas as DANIEL Plus the SOP boys - Emil and Yevel Directed by Freddie Santos

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Awesome Dive April 26-28, 2005	Lilo N' Stitch April 29 - May 1, 2005	Asian Academy of Music Recital April 29, 2005

AYALA GREENBELT

A Day with An Artist
April 23 & 30, 2005

GREENBELT Onstage AYALA CENTER

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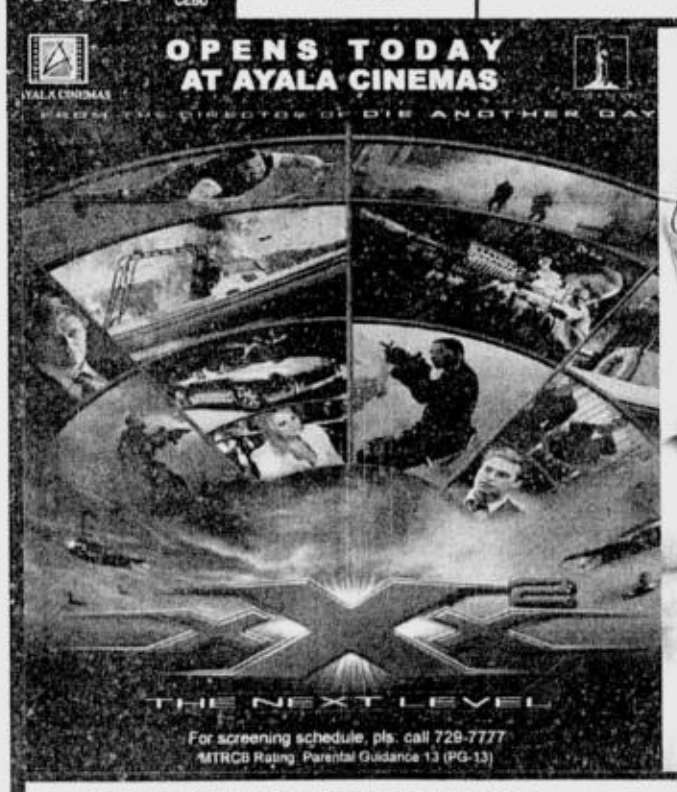
AYALA CINEMAS

AYALA CINEMAS

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS GB4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 GUESS WHO	2 XXX 2	3 THE INTERPRETER	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 GUESS WHO	2 THE WEDDING DATE	3 THX THE INTERPRETER 12:10, 2:50, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SAHARA	5 CAN THIS BE LOVE	6 XXX 2	7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 CAN THIS BE LOVE 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00		2 XXX 2 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE INTERPRETER 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX XXX 2 2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:10, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 THE WEDDING DATE 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FINDING NEVERLAND 2:30, 4:30, 6:30 XXX 2 8:35, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 GUESS WHO 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX XXX 2		2 CAN THIS BE LOVE	
	3 GUESS WHO	4 THE WEDDING DATE	5 THE INTERPRETER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 XXX 2	2 BE COOL	3 CAN THIS BE LOVE	4 FINDING NEVERLAND



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ROLLING STONE

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Paul Clinton, CNN

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All-Digital Cinemas

MARKET! MARKET!

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1. The Interpreter
2. Wedding Date
3. Sahara
4. Can This Be Love

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00

5. Ring of Nibelungs
6. Guess Who
7. XXX 2

EVENTS! EVENTS!

MARKET! MARKET! The fun is in the finds

Harvest! Summer Festival presents

Bayanihan Dance Troupe
April 28, 2005
Thursday, 6 pm
Activity Center

The Hits
Badminton Challenge
Final Round
April 30 - May 1, 2005
Saturday & Sunday
Activity Center

colors of summer
May 1, 2005, Sunday
Children's Party, 12nn to 4pm
Kiddie Fashion Show, 4pm

Sunday, 12nn - 5pm
A children's festival at the 3rd Level, Children's Zone

Not giving up on love

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

RUFFA Mae Quinto may seem carefree, but when it comes to affairs of the heart she does not take things lightly. For the sexy comedienne, *l'amour* is no laughing matter. She told me that her split-up with cager **Rudy Hatfield** is not final. They are trying with all their might to patch things up. "I know we will be able to fix whatever our problems are because we've got so much love for each other. We are talking things over This is just a phase. It's not the end!" she said, sighing. I can almost hear Ruffa Mae whispering her signature "Marinara" line to Rudy: "Fish *tayo*"

Aiko aglow

AIKO Melendez was all aglow when I saw her. The kind of glow that can only come from a warmed-up heart. Her love life is rosey again. Aiko is going steady with singer/theater actor/businessman **Jonard Yamson.**

She gushed, "Jo and I have been on for six months now. What I love about him the most is that he loves my son Andre very much. I can say that serious *na talaga ito*!"

I teased her, "How about the other Jo in your life ... Jomari?" The blooming QC councilor smiled as she said, "We've never been as ok with each other as we are now. We're both happy with our own lives. I welcome the idea of working with him. They are cooking up a project for us soon." Whatever love is cooking, Aiko's got all the ingredients for it. Hopefully this time around she has the right recipe. Love owes her a better deal because she's always given her all to it.

Disruptive star

GUESS who this young TV idol is! She entered the theatre in the middle of the film's screening. From the moment she arrived, she began distracting people because she couldn't stay put in her seat. All she did was walk in and out of the movie house with her *yaya* in tow. To make matters worse, her cell phone kept ringing as she kept grumbling. Before the movie ended she left in a huff. She didn't even catch a glimpse of the movie. Why did she enter the theater in the first place? Perhaps she thinks that the next best thing to having her own movie (which seems to be a remote possibility since she still has a lot to learn in the biz) is making a scene inside a movie house, huh?

But why?

From a concerned TV insider...." I just don't know why the media is giving undue importance to the case of the Baywalk bodies (the camps of their former manager and their current handler clashed after the hearing; resulting in a fist fight in the City hall premises). It is such a cheap and undignified display of behavior. It degrades the business. What good does their case do to our dying industry, anyway? Outsiders don't have such high regard for show biz folk anymore because of such behavior. Why can't media get news that will benefit the integrity of our workplace and not issues that would mock us?"

I guess the Baywalk bodies better take a long long walk and keep their erring managers at bay!

Me with Korina

Catch me on "Rated K" this Sunday (ABS-CBN 7:30 p.m.). It was heartwarming to reminisce about my mom with **Korina.** I am now the sum total of all those wonderful memories. Other guests in the show are **Ms Gina de Venecia** (who talked fondly about her lovely daughter KC), **Metring David** and **Champoy.** There's a segment about amnesia and photographic memory. In the end, memories are all we will have left, so make as many as possible with your loved ones while you still can.

My endless thanks to **Tita Cristy Fermin, Boy Abunda, Kris Aquino** and the staff of "The Buzz" for making my son (former child star) **Icey Mendoza's** "coming out" such a breeze. What you all did for Icey last Sunday has changed his world for the better. No doubt my mom was in the studio egging Icey on because she has always had a soft spot for the third sex. Young as he is, I'm so proud of Icey for being "man" enough to admit that he's gay. To you my dear Icey.... The world may be cruel at times but just remember that you'll always have me to come home to!

ABS-CBN in Cebu

This is in reference to your "Dollywood" column item (April 26), titled "TV network panics."

For the record, ABS-CBN has been the market leader in Cebu for a long time, with more than 50 percent of the region's market share. The network has been a part of the region since the establishment of its station-base in the area even before the start of Martial Law, until the station's re-opening at the end of the dictatorial regime.

Same as the network's fame, ABS-CBN artists have always been big in Cebu, and an event such as the "Daghang Salamat Cebu," slated April 29 to May 2, is highly-anticipated by Cebuanos.

"Daghang Salamat," in collaboration with the Regional Network Group (RNG) of the Cebu station, is a big "thank-you" for the Cebuanos' continued support for 15 years.

Leah C. Salterio
Corporate Public Relations Director
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

Stars galore

Bound for Cebu are the network's stars led by Ms Charo Santos-Concio, Comedy King Dolphy and Kris Aquino. There will be Kapamilya star sightings in six malls—Robinson's Place Cebu, Gaisano Country Mall and Super Metro Mandaue. Live shows of "ASAP Mania," "ASAP Fanatic," "The Buzz," "Wanna Buzz" and "Search for Star in a Million" from April 30-May 2 will be held in Ayala Center Cebu Activity Center, JY Square, Elizabeth Mall and Plaza Independencia. "TV Patrol Linggo" and "Magandang Umaga Bayan" (MUB) also joins in the festivity to deliver the celebrations all over the country. Studio 23's "Breakfast" even pairs up with "MUB" for a joint broadcast tagged as "Magandang Umaga Bai—Breakfast Kita" that will be broadcast simultaneously via ABS-CBN, ANC and Studio 23.

As part of the extensive coverage of the network's reaching out to all their Kapamilyas in the Philippines, the RNG of ABS-CBN will be covering the Gawagaway-Yan Festival of Isabela, 7th anniversary of Laoag, Legazpi's Butanding Festival and Pista'y Dayat and Bangus Festival of Baguio and Dagupan. In Visayas, there will be coverage on the Panaad sa Negros Festival and Cebu's Kadaugan sa Mactan. There will also be a feature on the Cocowayan Festival in Zamboanga.

The thanksgiving event is part of the various festivities for the whole month of April and has been pre-planned on a larger scale ahead others. Contrary to reports, the event was not "hastily planned" by the network's executives "to stop GMA," or any other network for that matter, "from its tracks" as written in your column.

All the activities, and the name and number of star attendees can not be arranged in a rush.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

AIKO Melendez with Jonard Yamson

10,000 donors worldwide help ABS-CBN Infanta rehab work

FROM Malaga, Spain to Butuan City, from California to Camarines Norte, donations solicited by ABS-CBN Sagip-Kapamilya have come pouring in for the typhoon victims of Infanta, Quezon.

As of end of March, donations in cash and kind have been distributed to more than 100,000 families affected by the super typhoons that hit the province last year. The donations helped build homes in partnership with Kalinga Luzon.

In January, "Sagip" started Food for Work, in which Infanta residents themselves joined reconstruction activities in their own communities. In return, they received relief goods.

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His daughter's Mr. Right just turned out to be...
Mr. White.
bernie mac ashton kutcher
guess who
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DO YOU LIVE IN A HAUNTED HOUSE? FIND OUT ON MAY 11
ON November 13, 1973, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a nightmarish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been murdered in their beds while they slept. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying "demonic spirits" in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.
One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.
What happened next inside this haunted house will shock you to no end.
28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the residence-lucky to escape with their lives. THIS IS THEIR TRUE STORY.
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ENTERTAINMENT

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BELLA Dy-Tan, left, with fast friends Gary and Angeli Valenciano

Goodbye to a pillar of the music industry

By Ernie Pecho
Contributor

BELLA Dy-Tan, record producer and star builder, succumbed to cancer in the early morning of Tuesday. She was to turn 52 in June.

Friends and co-workers in the Philippine music industry had known that she was in remission from the Big C for two years. Early this year, she tested positive once more.

She hurriedly flew with her entire family—husband Jack Tan, son Jeffrey and daughter Jaclyn—to Houston, Texas, to get treatment. They came home last week, keeping their arrival under wraps.

On Monday, she turned up at her Universal Records Tower office in Quezon City, surprising everyone. The whole staff could see that the boss was weak and gasping for breath, but she put up a very brave front, approaching each one to say, "Keep up the good work."

The following day, she passed on.

As a record producer, Tan—former chair of the Philippine Association of the Record Industry—instinctively knew how to pick the right song for right talent.

This was how she helped build and develop the careers of leading Filipino artists. She revived the career of Jose Mari Chan, who went on to win two Diamond Record Awards for sales of more than 500,000 copies each for his "Constant Change" and "Christmas In Our Hearts" albums.

The Apo Hiking Society's reign of several decades in the Pinoy pop scene were likewise spent with Tan as executive producer.

She had another Diamond record awardee in the late blind singer-composer Willy Garte, whose "Bawal Na Gamot" album sold more than 500,000 copies.

In 19 years of collaboration with her, Gary Valenciano came up with several multi-platinum albums and the highest number of hit singles by one artist.

During Tan's last moments, Gary V and his wife Angeli were at her side. Valenciano officially dedicated to his friend and producer a composition that he first sang to Tan during a dinner celebration of their Awit Awards triumph last year.

The song is "Break Me." Part of it reads: "If there's no other way to make me whole,' go ahead and break me, gently remake me./ Holding on I won't give up coz I know you won't give up. You're

GOODBYE/ A29

Karylle says she's not jealous of Antoinette

By Marinel R. Cruz

"YES, Dingdong and I discuss my feelings about his previous relationship. But out of respect, I've decided to keep quiet about it in public. I'm not in a position to say anything," said actress Karylle, who last week admitted to having a real-life relationship with on-screen partner Dingdong Dantes.

Fans supporting Dingdong and his former girlfriend, Antoinette Taus, are not happy with the news. Antoinette's camp is reportedly blaming Karylle for the breakup.

"If he wants to talk about it, I leave it up to him," Karylle told INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday. "I don't feel insecure or jealous or angry. I will not let myself be affected. I don't think she's a spiteful person *naman*."

Karylle and Dingdong first worked together for the youth-oriented weekly series "Love to Love" on GMA 7. They were also featured in Regal Entertainment's thriller "Bahay ni Lola 2."

Now they play the lead characters, Ybarro and Alena, on GMA 7's newest fantaserye "Encantadia," which will air its pilot episode on May 2.

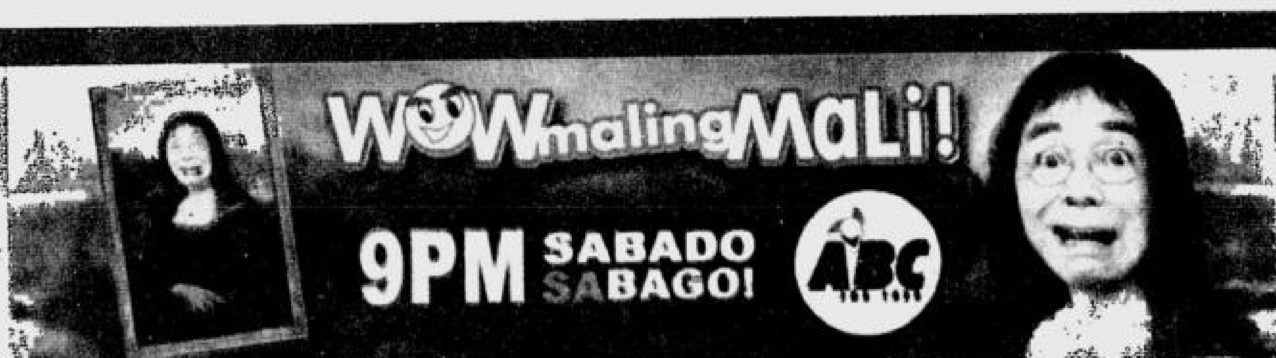
Karylle and Dingdong formally an-

KARYLLE/ A29

DINGDONG and Karylle

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Thursday, April 28, 2005



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjokng	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Spirits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Hungry Heart	Knockout	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	All About Eve (8:45 PM)	Full House (9:15 PM)		Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Vietnam Revisited (2003 SEG Review)		One-On-One	The Regional Billiards		IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		WWE Smackdown				Mutant League	Heavy Gear	Maxsteel	Avengers	Stargate SG1		Thunder Box		JAG		Stand Off			
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Cow At The Moo-vies	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Pipti Pipti (One For You, Two For Me)				Dahil May Isang Ikaw				Apoy Sa Karagatan				Dahas				Macho Dancer	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			Miss Match		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 7		7 Days (Season III)		Alias (Season III)		30 Seconds To Fame	30 Seconds To Fame	Lost		The Contender		The Contender	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Chronicle News From The Edge/The Simple Life 2	Arrested Development	The Apprentice			American Idol
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Solar Sports				KDTV Classics				Super X Series	Women's Volleyball '04				NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs First Round					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO	Bugs			She's Having A Baby			Surviving Love (5:45 PM)			Biker Boyz (7:10 PM)				Mystic River				Phantom Force (11:15PM)	
Star Movies				Agent Red (aka Captured)				Beethoven's 2nd			Jawbreaker			In Hell			Intrepid (10:40PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Asian Tour: BMW Asian Open Day1				2004 Spinn-tational Table Tennis C'ships	2004 WPBA Cuetec Cues Florida Classic		World Pool Trick Shot Masters '04				Sportscenter Asia	UEFA Champions League 2004/05					Goals!	
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax		King Kong Lives (3:15 PM)				Global Effect (5:15 PM)				Panic Room				Poodle Springs			Simone (10:40PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Strong Medicine		Monster Makers			Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye (10:35PM)		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Machines		Ultimates		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus		Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf Day2				Golf Globe 2002	Search TV	Raceworld		World's Greatest Auto Shows		Italia Serie A				NASCAR Subway Fresh 500 Phoenix			
NBN		Taiwan Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

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Website: www.inq7money.net

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Plan holders file class suit vs CAP

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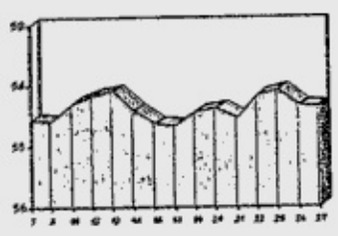


₱54.37 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 27, 2005

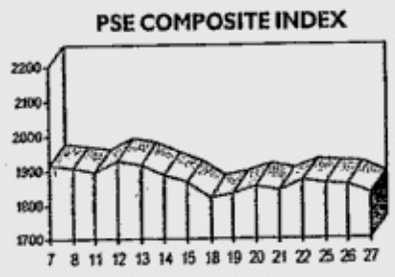
¥106.18 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 27, 2005

GOLD: $435.00-435.50
per ounce Hong Kong, April 26, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares end 1.5% lower on delay in VAT law changes

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



STOCKS took a beating yesterday, as investors showed their disappointment over lawmakers' failure to live up to their promise to pass much-awaited amendments to the value-added-tax law this week, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index closed down 27.82 points, or 1.5 percent, at 1,830.32, adding to Tuesday's 0.1-percent loss.

Lawmakers have suspended discussions on VAT law amendments because senators and congressmen couldn't reach an agreement on key issues, said Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

"Until there is a compromise, there could possibly be no schedules this week," he said. *AP*

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

A GROUP of planholders of College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) yesterday filed a class suit against the embattled pre-need firm, its directors and affiliate companies.

Maricel Pascual-Lopez, lead counsel for 19 plan holders and acting on behalf of 780,603 CAP plan holders, filed the complaint with the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC), urging it to appoint a receiver to immediately take over the management and control of CAP.

CAP first vice president Bobby Cafe said they would refer the case to their lawyers. "It is difficult to comment on the issues until we have received our copy of the suit."

In their 66-page complaint, the plan holders also pleaded that a management committee be created and for the court to direct CAP and its directors and related companies to nullify all pre-need policies and return the money of its plan holders.

They also urged the court to nullify and cancel all contracts and transfers made with other defendants and affiliated companies, and disgorge all profits obtained from the allegedly fraudulent misuse of plan holders' funds.

Lopez and the other complainants, representing maids, jeepney drivers and professionals, alleged that the board of directors of CAP, Comprehensive Annuity Plans and Pension Corp., and in particular, members of the Sobrepeña family, "in wanton breach of their fiduciary obligations," used the funds of CAP as their personal "piggy bank" to bankroll directly and indirectly the operations of their family-owned corporations.

These related companies allegedly included Fil-Estate Corp., Fil-Estate Development Corp., Camp John Hay Golf Club, Fil-Estate Properties Inc., Fil-Estate Management Inc., Fil-Estate Land Inc., Fil Estate Golf And Development Inc., Fil-Estate Sports Corp., Fil-Estate Infrastructure Inc., Cap General Insurance, CAP Realty, Metro Rail Transit Corp., Manila Southwoods, Southwoods Ecocentrum, Sherwood Hills Golf & Country Club/Golden Dear International Inc., and Global Building Systems Inc.

As early as 1997, the complaint claimed that CAP had incurred trust fund deficiencies of P300 million and still filed for a license to be allowed to sell P5 billion

PLAN HOLDERS/ B2

REHAB APPROVAL

Maynilad buyout put on hold

By Christine A. Gaylican and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System has formally informed construction giant DMCI Holdings Inc. that it could not act on its offer to acquire a stake in west concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc. until after the final rehabilitation plan for the Lopez firm has been approved by the courts.

Oscar Garcia, acting chair of the MWSS board of trustees, said in a letter dated April 26 to DMCI that it was premature at this time to act on the offer.

MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade confirmed the issuance of the letter in a separate interview. "We told them we have to wait for the approval of the corporate rehabilitation plan by the regional trial court, which will be very soon," he said.

Another top MWSS official noted that allowing new investors at this crucial stage might disrupt negotiations with Maynilad creditors.

The MWSS source noted that after the approval of the rehabilitation plan, the MWSS and Maynilad could then entertain proposals from prospective investors during the capital restructuring phase that it would file before the Securities and Exchange Commission.

MWSS/ B2

World Bank bullish on RP, East Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank yesterday said emerging East Asian economies would still grow at 6 percent this year despite the December tsunami tragedy, after hitting a peak of 7.2 percent in 2004.

In its regional economic briefing, the bank also upgraded its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for most countries in the region, including the Philippines, which was now seen expanding by 5 percent this year, up from the earlier forecast of 4.5 percent.

The projected 5-percent growth, however, makes the Philippines the laggard among the biggest economies of Southeast Asia.

Indonesia was forecast to grow by 5.5 per-

WORLD/ B2

Meralco reports P1.7-B loss

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED Manila Electric Co. registered a net loss of P1.7 billion in the first quarter, reversing the net income of P344.4 million in the same period last year.

This was traced to the distribution utility's P1.4-billion provision for probable losses in preparation for a possible adverse Supreme Court ruling on its unbundling rate case.

The Court of Appeals last year voided the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of Meralco's rate unbundling application, an order that also effectively nullified a rate increase of 17 centavos a kilowatt-hour (kWh).

Of the approved 17-centavo rate increase, 8.35 centavos a kWh went to the state-owned National Transmission Corp. as payment for transmission charges and 8.65 centavos went to Meralco as payment for distribution charges.

Meralco filed a motion for reconsideration of the decision, but the appellate court early this year junked this as well. The case is now pending with the high tribunal.

Even while its bottom line suffered because of the provisions, Meralco's operating revenues for the first quarter grew by 12.3-percent to P36.4 billion from P32.5 billion in the same period a year ago.

Before the provision, the power distributor's operating income amounted to P519.4 million.

Due to the drastic hit on the company's bottom line, Meralco kept its capital expenditure spending at lower levels, shelling out less than P1.1 billion in the first quarter from close to P1.3 billion in the same period last year.

The first-quarter capex was spent for electricity-related capital projects to service new connections and for maintenance as well as on other distribution-related projects.

Total energy sales during the first quarter reached 5,588.1 gigawatt-hours (GWh), dropping 0.03 percent from last year's 5,589.6 GWh.

The slight decline was attributed to the early onset of the Lenten season, the shorter billing cycle in February and the rise in National Power Corp.'s rates, which were reflected in Meralco bills in November last year.

The commercial sector continued to register the fastest growth in terms of customer count and energy sales. Customer count rose 4.1 percent in the first quarter, while energy sales went up by 2.8 percent to 2,038.8 GWh.

Despite the drop in the number of customers in the industrial class, this sector posted a 2.1-percent increase in energy sales to 1,604.8 GWh.

The lowest growth was registered in the residential sector, with energy sales of 1,909.9 GWh down by 4.6 percent from the 2,000.9 GWh posted in the same quarter a year ago.

GMA-7 inks deal with US firm

BROADCASTING giant GMA Network Inc. recently signed a carriage agreement with American Comcast for the distribution of the GMA Pinoy TV channel in the United States.

GMA Network chair, president and chief executive Felipe Gozon said the agreement would expand the network's footprint abroad, enabling it to reach a wider audience outside of the Philippines.

"Through Comcast, we will be able to serve a large number of Fil-Ams with the best news and public affairs and entertainment programs, which are No. 1 in Mega Manila ratings today," he said in a statement yesterday. "We look forward to a fruitful, long-term relationship with Comcast."

Comcast is the biggest cable provider in the United States with 21.5 million cable TV customers and seven million high-speed Internet clients.

The company is mainly involved in the development, management and operation of broadband cable networks as well as in the delivery of programs.

Under the carriage agreement, Comcast will distribute the GMA Pinoy TV channel to its subscribers in the United States on a per-subscription scheme.

In selected markets, Comcast will also offer content from GMA Pinoy TV on its video-on-demand service.

GMA Pinoy TV is GMA Network's international channel, which delivers 24-hour programming for Filipinos abroad.

The channel contains some of GMA Network's top-rating local shows such as "Eat Bulaga," "SOP," "Bubble Gang" and "Saksi." *Abigail L. Ho*

SM STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING
SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's largest shopping mall owner, developer and operator declared cash dividends totaling P2.3 billion equivalent to 50 percent of 2004 net income of P4.6 billion. It was announced during the company's annual stockholders' meeting on April 25, 2005 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. At the meeting were (from left) Hans Sy, Henry Sy Sr., Jose Cuisia and Henry Sy Jr. RUDY ESPERAS

PNOC unit signs cooperation pact with Chinese company

PHILIPPINE National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with China CAMC Engineering Co. Ltd. (CAMCE) for possible joint ventures in developing renewable energy resources here and in China.

Under the MOU, CAMCE will provide PNOC-EDC with the necessary assistance to conduct new or update existing feasibility studies and technology assessments. The state-owned Chinese firm will also send experts that will help PNOC-EDC prepare for renewable energy projects.

Financial assistance will also be provided by way of CAMCE's securing the necessary financing facilities from government financial institutions in China, subject to the approval of the Philippine and Chinese governments.

While PNOC-EDC will consider these CAMCE-secured financing facilities, it will continue to seek the financing facility that will give it the most advantageous terms.

Signing the MOU were PNOC-EDC president Paul Aquino and CAMCE president Luo Yan. The signing coincided with the three-day state visit of President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China.

Apart from the signing of the MOU, Aquino said the passage of a new law on renewable energy sources in China made PNOC-EDC keen on developing geothermal resources in China.

The law, which will be enacted by January 2006, allows the central government to set prices for electricity that will come from renewable energy sources. The pricing will depend on the type of renewable energy resource that is used to generate the power that will be sold. *Abigail L. Ho*

Tan firm launches UK's Virgin Cola

INTERBEV, the soft drink subsidiary of Asia Brewery, and the Virgin Group of Companies have rolled out the carpet for the local launching of Virgin Colours, one of the top soft drink brands in the United Kingdom uniquely packaged in a shapely bottle.

Initially made available in Metro Manila and selected areas in the Southern Tagalog region, the licensed Virgin variants—Virgin Red (Cola), Virgin White (Diet Cola), Virgin Juicy Orange (Orange) and Virgin Blue (Lemon Lime)—are already making waves, according to Interbev.

Virgin Cola created a fanfare when it was launched in the United Kingdom because of the design of its bottle, which was inspired by the curvaceous figure of Baywatch stunner Pamela Anderson—giving it the monicker "The Pammy."

"The marker's response has been very encouraging. Sales continue to exceed targets and more and more dealers are applying with us," said Interbev vice president Hubert Tan.

Tan made the announcement during a recent gathering with Virgin Cola dealers, which was also attended by Jonathan Cockroft, president of Virgin Drinks UK, at the Asia Brewery plant in Cabuyao, Laguna, where Virgin Cola is being bottled and canned locally.

Plan holders file class suit . . .

From page B1

worth of plans with the SEC.

By 2001, it alleged that the trust fund deficiency ballooned to more than P2 billion and applied subsequently for a permit to sell more plans with the SEC. The trust fund deficit now stands at P17 billion.

"CAP and CAP Pension were using new policies to pay for old policies since the trust fund was no longer sufficient to pay for their commitment. In the end, CAP was nothing more than a Ponzi scam successfully perpetrated on 780,603 current policy holders left holding the proverbial empty bag," the complaint claimed.

However, Cafe said there couldn't be any estafa since CAP was not swindling anyone and was not running away from its obligations.

"In spite of the tremendous increase in tuition fees, we are still paying plan holders and expect to continue paying as the plans mature. In fact, from March 28 up to now, we have released about P423 million in manager's checks to pay for tuitions, with hundreds of checks still to be claimed by plan holders. Our plan holders only need to go to the 7th floor of our building to claim their checks. Right now, we are processing claims for the summer classes as well as for the incoming first semester of SY 2005-2006," Cafe said.

In a press conference yesterday, Lopez cited CAP's investments in Bank of Commerce, Fil-Estate Land and in the MRT bonds as the alleged signs of fraud.

However, BOC president Raul de Mesa said CAP's decision to acquire an interest in the bank was made by another trustee bank, adding that when the bank issued stock rights, all stakeholders, not just CAP acquired shares at the same price.

"Everybody paid a premium," he said.

The class suit came as CAP said that it paid out almost P424 million in tuition to plan holders nationwide despite the SEC's non-renewal of its dealer's license.

The SEC withheld renewal of CAP's licenses to sell new plans in September 2004 when the existing license expired.

World Bank bullish . . .

From page B1

cent this year and 6 percent next year; Thailand, by 5.2 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively. Malaysia, on the other hand, was expected to grow by 5.3 percent over the next two years.

As part of a "booming" Asian region led by emerging economic powerhouses China and India, WB country director Joachim von Amsberg said the Philippines, with its rich in natural and human resources, was in a good position to share in income gains across the region.

He noted that Philippine exports to China had increased 224 percent from 2001 to 2003.

"Rather than be afraid of the successes of its neighbors, it can benefit from these successes," Von Amsberg said, noting however that the potential windfall was not automatic, and largely dependent on the country's ability to pursue fiscal reforms and improve the investment climate.

"But this window of opportunity continues to narrow as demand dampens due to rising inflation and the increasing cost of oil. The country needs to take advantage of the favorable regional economic environment to push for critical reforms to increase revenues substantially," Von Amsberg said.

The "emerging" East Asian region includes China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam as well as the four newly industrializing economies (NIEs) Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

The WB report said fiscal developments in the Philippines during much of the past year were overshadowed by increasing concern over the sustainability of public debt trends and financing of public sector deficits.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 27, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	25.5	26	25.5	26	54,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48	48	47	47.5	1,223,300
China Banking Corp.	650	655	650	655	7,990
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.63	0.63	2,280,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	46.5	46	46.5	69,300
International Exch. Bank	18	18	18	18	13,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	32	30.5	31	938,900
Philippine National Bank	31	31	29.5	29.5	37,000
Security Bank Corp.	27	27	26.5	26.5	6,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28	28	81,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	12,000
First Abacus Financial	0.45	0.55	0.45	0.55	50,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2430	2440	2430	2440	990
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.04	451,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1610	1610	1610	1610	1,310
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.25	13.75	13.75	42,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.04	1.04	0.99	1.02	6,370,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3.2	3.2	3	3	7,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	835	835	820	820	26,060
Ipeople Inc.	4	4	3.95	3.95	18,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.041	0.041	0.04	0.04	1,900,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	2,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.2	3.2	3	3.05	4,927,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1360	1385	1360	1380	196,320
Ivantage Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.65	400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	126,000,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16	15.5	15.5	40,200
Manila Electric Co. B	22.5	22.5	21.25	21.25	1,284,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	5.9	5,258,000
Petron Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	2,935,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	392,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.7	1.7	175,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	4,226,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.56	0.56	940,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.6	2.6	1,269,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	10,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	13,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.25	3.25	76,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	28	28.5	145,800
RFM Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57	58	31,300
San Miguel Corp. B	82.5	83	82.5	83	64,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.26	0.26	600,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	2,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.5	6.6	5,459,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.42	0.42	340,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.35	1,096,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.038	0.038	0.036	0.036	6,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.82	1.9	2,955,000
APC Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	400,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	90,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13.25	13.25	13	13	20,600
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1	0.9	0.91	16,480,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	770,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.21	0.225	4,830,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.3	0.27	0.27	1,070,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.46	2.46	8,749,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	190,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.7	8.7	8.3	8.3	479,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43.5	43.5	42.5	42.5	647,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	150,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.085	0.085	0.0825	0.0825	10,000,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	385,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.35	3.15	3.2	2,391,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.78	1.78	160,000
Medco Holdings	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.24	1.28	6,702,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.34	0.36	95,050,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	350,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	40,000
SM Investments Corp.	245	247	245	246	288,350
South China Resources Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.205	0.205	9,400,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,000,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.42	1.5	1.36	1.5	27,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.7	0.7	120,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.06	1.08	9,287,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.87	0.87	350,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.46	1.5	1,456,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	3,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	3,100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	351,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	6,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.4	11,879,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	10,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.26	2,600,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.38	0.38	18,290,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.34	1.36	12,480,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2	2	2	2	40,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	210,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	300,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	220,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	1,518,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	160,000
SM Development Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.56	1.56	225,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.4	3,325,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	20,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	30,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	28,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	42,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	10	9.2	9.2	180,000
Benguet Corp. B	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	17,500
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	4,560,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.34	6,920,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	64,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	147,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.007	453,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.95	0.95	0.91	0.91	780,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.14	1.14	1.08	1.08	1,050,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	36	36	33	33	321,900
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	3,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	77,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	38,000,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	12,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.38	2.38	2.36	2.36	43,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.16	6,550,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	100,000

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **SM Development Corp.** were Henry Sy Sr., Rogelio R. Cabuñag, Henry T. Sy Jr., Andres G. Gatmaitan, Octavio V. Espiritu, Ricardo J. Romulo and Hans T. Sy. The company also disclosed its declaration of a regular cash dividend of P0.05 per share plus a special cash dividend of additional P0.03 per share for a total cash dividend of P0.08 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of May 26, payable on or before June 21.

* * *

STENIEL Manufacturing Corp. disclosed its appointment of Joaquin Cunanan and Co. as the external auditor of the company, and that the elected directors were Perry L. Pe, Genesis Goldi D. Golingan, Paul Richard T. Camanglan, Stanley Leung, Christopher Wilfried Heine and Leonardo T. Siguion-Reyna.

* * *

CHEMICAL Industries of the Philippines Inc. disclosed its approval of a resolution resetting of the annual stockholders' meeting from May 3 to July 7. Stockholders of record as of July 7 are entitled to vote in the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Philippine Trust Co.** were chairman emeritus Emilio T. Yap, chairman Jaime C. Laya, vice chairman Emilio A. Gancayco, vice chairman Basilio C. Yap, Antonio H. Ozatea, Conrado S. Janairo, Jaime L. Sumulong, Francisco L. Gochioco, Ernesto O. Chan, lawyers Eusebio S. Go, Ricardo G. Verzosa and Martin B. Isidro. ***Compiled by Erika Sarmiento, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

April 27, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.769941	1.000000	54.2490
Japan	Yen	0.007267	0.009438	0.5120
United Kingdom	Pound	1.467816	1.906400	103.4203
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098732	0.128233	6.9565
Switzerland	Franc	0.648809	0.842673	45.7142
Canada	Dollar	0.618427	0.803213	43.5735
Singapore	Dollar	0.467623	0.607349	32.9481
Australia	Dollar	0.599643	0.778816	42.2500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.042339	2.652590	143.9004
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205301	0.266645	14.4652
Brunei	Dollar	0.466207	0.605510	32.8483
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000103	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.019483	0.025305	1.3728
UAE	Dirham	0.209639	0.272279	14.7709
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.298800	70.4586
Argentina	Peso	0.265726	0.345125	18.7227
Brazil	Real	0.303067	0.393623	21.3537
Denmark	Kroner	0.134237	0.174347	9.4582
India	Rupee	0.017659	0.022936	1.2443
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202643	0.263193	14.2780
Mexico	New Peso	0.069490	0.090253	4.8961
New Zealand	Dollar	0.557726	0.724375	39.2966
Norway	Kroner	0.122998	0.159750	8.6663
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012956	0.016827	0.9128
South Africa	Rand	0.126970	0.164908	8.9461
Korea	Won	0.000771	0.001001	0.0543
Sweden	Kroner	0.109351	0.142025	7.7047
Syria	Pound	0.014832	0.019264	1.0451
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024563	0.031903	1.7307
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000359	0.000466	0.0253

Maynilad buyout . . .

From page B1

DMCI is one of the private entities that has signified interest to wholly acquire the west concessionaire to be abandoned by the Lopez Group. The other interested consortium led by investment bank ING Barings is reportedly backed by the Ayala Group and the World Bank's International Finance Corp.

In a separate interview, DMCI officials said they were still keen on Maynilad despite the letter from the government-regulator MWSS.

Sources said DMCI was willing to put in an investment in Maynilad equivalent to "the amount required under its rehabilitation plan to pay off between $50 million and $60 million worth of liabilities" to creditor banks.

Gov't debt hit P4.01T as of end-January

By Michelle V. Remo

UNABATED borrowings to close the budget gap pushed the national government debt to P4.01 trillion as of January this year, 5.1 percent more than the P3.81 trillion recorded at the end of last year.

This means that each of the 84 million Filipinos has an estimated share of P47,000 in the national government's liabilities.

The national debt refers to the accumulated borrowings that the government incurred over the years to finance the budget deficit.

The Philippines has been in a deficit since the late 1990s as revenues were not enough to cover expenditures.

According to data from the Department of Finance, P2.04 trillion of the total debt came from domestic sources, while the remaining P1.97 trillion was secured from abroad.

The government usually borrows locally through the regular auction of Treasury bills and bonds, while foreign debt comes from flotation of sovereign bonds in the international credit market, and official development assistance from multilateral and bilateral lending agencies.

The DOF said the foreign debt level as of end-January was higher by P158.3 billion, or 8.7 percent, than the end-2004 level.

The growth, however, was slower than expected due to the strengthening of the peso and other currencies against the US dollar.

The increase in foreign debt was mainly due to the government's absorption of Napocor debts.

On the other hand, domestic debt was 1.8-percent or P2 billion higher than last year.

The DOF said that of the total debt as of January, 15.5 percent were composed of short-term loans, 26.1 percent were medium-term, and 58.4 percent were long-term liabilities.

The latest debt figure does not include the national government's contingent liabilities, which are composed of guarantees to borrowings made by state-owned firms.

The DOF said contingent liabilities as of January declined to P619 billion from P833.7 billion as of end-2004.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said the profile of the country's debts, most of which have long-term maturities, places the government at a comfortable level and still far from a much-feared fiscal crisis.

The DOF said it has adopted the policy of "opportunistic borrowing," which favors loans with long-term maturities over short and medium-term loans.

Purisima said the DOF also preferred to borrow locally, rather than get loans from abroad to avoid foreign exchange risk.

PURISIMA

The DOF said that in case it has to borrow from foreign sources, it would prefer ODAs over commercial loans because the former carry a lower interest rate.

7 nations drop opposition to QRs on rice

By Christine A. Gaylican

GOVERNMENT negotiators have convinced seven countries to drop their opposition to the country's plan to keep quantitative restrictions on rice imports, the Department of Agriculture said yesterday.

DA Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano said in an interview that negotiators, led by National Food Authority Administrator Gregorio Tan Jr., have convinced China, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Egypt, India and Pakistan to allow the Philippines to maintain the restrictions.

This leaves only the United States and Thailand on the list of member-countries of the World Trade Organization opposed to the Philippines' plan.

Serrano said the negotiators were scheduled to meet with representatives of the two countries in May to convince them to support the QRs.

Sources said the US might consider supporting the Philippines on its request on QRs in return for concessions on corn imports, while Thailand might ask for larger allocations for rice imports.

"We are preparing to make our counter offers with US and Thailand in the coming weeks. We are determined to beat the deadline by June," Serrano noted.

By maintaining quantitative restrictions, or QRs, on rice imports, the government will be able to limit the country's annual rice import volume.

Lifting the QRs, on the other hand, would open the floodgates for rice, provided importers paid the required tariffs.

To keep its QRs, the Philippines has acceded to certain demands of WTO member-countries.

The country, for instance, provided China with a country specific quota of 25,000 metric tons of rice a year.

China is one of the traditional sources of rice imports for the country. The other two are Vietnam and Thailand.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said in a separate interview that the Philippine negotiating team was considering an increase in the rice minimum access volume (MAV) allocation as a concession.

"We may consider increasing the MAV allocation, but we can't just fix it as a percentage of national consumption," Yap said.

The Philippines has a national daily rice consumption of 28,000 metric tons (MT) or 10.22 million MT a year. Negotiating countries were reported earlier to ask for doubling of the MAV from the present 240,000 MT.

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People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

UK's Virgin Cola is here

INTERBEV, the softdrink subsidiary of Asia Brewery, and the Virgin Group of Companies have rolled out the carpet for the local launching of Virgin Colours, one of the softdrinks brand in the United Kingdom uniquely packaged in a shapely bottle.

Initially made available in Metro Manila and selected areas in the Southern Tagalog region, the licensed Virgin variants - Virgin Red (Cola), Virgin White (Diet Cola), Virgin Juicy Orange (Orange) and Virgin Blue (Lemon Lime) - are already making waves.

Virgin Cola created a fanfare when it was launched in the UK because of the design of its bottle, which was inspired by the curvaceous 36C-21-35 figure of Baywatch stunner Pamela Anderson - giving it the monicker "The Pammy." Virgin boss Richard Branson reckons no red blooded male will able to resist taking the top off a Pammy and pressing his lips to its neck.

"The market's response has been very encouraging. Sales continue to exceed targets and more and more dealers are applying with us," said Interbev vice president Hubert Tan.

VIRGIN boss Richard Branson holding the Virgin 240 Returnable Glass Bottle, used only in the Philippines.

Tan made an announcement during a recent gathering with Virgin Cola dealers, which was also attended by Jonathan Cockroft, president of Virgin Drinks UK, at the Asia Brewery plant in Cabuyao, Laguna, where Virgin Cola is being bottled and canned locally.

"If our dealers were enthusiastic before, they are more so now as they realize how big the brand is globally and the potential of Virgin Cola to stir the softdrink industry in the Philippines," Tan said.

According to Tan, Virgin Cola is steadily moving towards to its goal of "shaking" the consumer softdrink industry in the Philippines. "One thing Interbev and Virgin Group share in common is we went to stir up established industries by introducing high-quality products at very competitive prices. Tan explained.

According to blind taste tests conducted last year, consumers found Virgin Cola better tasting than their current softdrink brand. Sales performance so far shows that consumers are beginning to follow their taste.

SHOPWISE 'FINAL PRICING GAME' WINNERS NAMED

Simultaneously held in Shopwise's four branches, namely Alabang, Araneta Center, Makati and Libis, 'The Final Pricing Game' featured the five weekly winners from each branch slugging it out for the grand prize. Four winners from the four branches emerged. They are: Jocelene Bucao from Alabang branch, Marcelino Ng from Makati branch, Janice Espenilla from Libis branch and Elizabeth Abatay from Araneta Center. Actual price of the grand showcase was P211,817.05. Shown in photo are Shopwise marketing representative Archie Carrasco, host George Domingo, assistant store manager for selling Ronald Gonzalvo, grand showcase winner Elizabeth Abatay, winner of the JVC microcomponent, Cresencia Centeno, Shopwise assistant vice president for marketing Ethel Villanoy and Shopwise assistant store manager for support Felipe Vicencio.

MANILA DRAGONS JOINS 1ST PHILIPPINE INT'L DRAGON BOAT COMPETITION

The Manila Dragons Dragon Boat Rowing Team, or simply, the Manila Dragons, was formed in 1991 and one of the earliest dragon boat teams in existence in the country. The group will be seen action in the upcoming First Philippine International Dragon Boat competition on May 5 to 8, in Boracay, Aklan. The team would like to thank the following companies for their support in this event: Negros Navigation (Nenaco), a pioneer and leader in Filipino inter-island shipping, and Philtown properties, a real estate company with development projects in McKinley, Fairways Tower, Metropolitan Tower across Rockwell. Also, the Manila Dragons invites other possible partners as it prepares for the dragon boat season this coming June 2005. The group expects to participate in the other upcoming local and international competition. For inquiries, please email-dragons@yahoo.com or call Greg Doronila, MDDRT Liason officer, at (0922)8109457.

Pacific Online upgrades PCSO's Visayas, Mindanao data center, lottery terminals

PACIFIC Online, the equipment lessor of government-run Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office or PCSO, which operates the on-line lottery nationwide, recently awarded to Scientific Games Inc of Alpharetta, Georgia, USA, the upgrading of its data center and the supply of on-line lottery terminals for use in the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

The project will cost Pacific Online approximately US$12 million, and is aimed at upgrading the data center and the terminals leased and operated by the PCSO in the southern half of the country. The complete migration is expected to be completed by the third quarter of the year.

"As we mark the start of our commercial operations, the Executive Committee of Pacific Online felt it needed to provide PCSO and the on-line lottery patrons in the Visayas and Mindanao with state-of-the-art lottery terminals, and a data center that is capable of connecting the latest communications protocol." declares Pacific Online chair and president Willy Ocier. "We expect the next eight years to be more productive for PCSO, and we want to give them our full support. Embarking on this expensive and expansive project is our way of proving our commitment to PCSO and to the government, so that they may increase their revenues to support their poverty alleviation programs", he concluded.

From a gross sales of P2.7 billion in 2004, PCSO forecasts a minimum of 20 percent increase for this year, targeting P3.2 billion in 2005, for the Visayas and Mindanao regions alone. With less terminal downtimes and more agents connected to the system because of the systems upgrade, PCSO could easily exceed their sales target.

Pacific Online's vice chair Manuel de Leon adds, "We share the vision of government on the need to increase revenues and since we support PCSO's Visayas and Mindanao operations, we are just doing our part in helping the government have more funds for social work. With this equipment and data center upgrading, PCSO should be able to expand coverage in the Visayas and Mindanao, and increase sales by unprecedented rates, thereby having more funds for its social welfare and poverty alleviation programs."

Pacific Online is a one hundred percent Filipino-owned corporation engaged in equipment leasing. Its major stockholders are Belle Corp; Subco Technology Inc; Abacus Gaming Technologies Inc, and Pacific Automated Systems Corp.

UNIVERSAL COLLEGE OF NURSING INAUGURATION

The Universal College of Nursing located along Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Paranaque City was inaugurated last April 21. The guests (from left) were: the Chair on Health Committee, Councilor Conchita 'Baby' Bustamante; City Health Officer, Dr. Olga Virtusio; Quezon City Executive Judge, Judge Ralph Lee; Parañaque City Mayor, Florencio 'Jun' Bernabe; Nurse's Reviewer, Arminda Alfonte; Nursing NCR RQAT chair, Dr. Lydia Cabigao; Universal College of Nursing president, Domingo Tay; Universal College of Nursing vice president, Divina Tay; (second row, to the right) Councilor on Education, Councilor Eric Baes, Chair of the City Information Department, Edmund D. Valen.

BITS Clips

1st Manila Motor Show

TO COINCIDE with the 2nd World Sports and Leisure, the 1st Manila Motor Show is a take-off from the North American International Auto Show, the Tokyo Motor Show and the Geneva Motor Show. It will showcase the new line-up of 2005 car models as well as a number of special vehicles and concept cars and winners of the Car of the Year Awards. It will be held today at 10 a.m., at the World Trade Center, Pasay City. Guest of Honor: Hon. Leandro R. Mendoza, Secretary, Dept. of Transportation and Communications, Elizabeth Lee, Campi president, Loule Dy Buncio, TMA president .

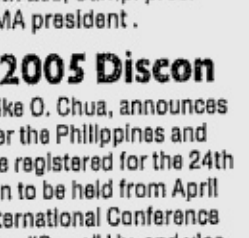
Toastmasters 2005 Discon

DISTRICT 75 governor Mike O. Chua, announces that delegates from all over the Philippines and from other countries, have registered for the 24th Annual District Convention to be held from April 29 to May 7 at the CSB International Conference Center Manila. DTM Johnny "Pawe" Uy, and vice-president of Toastmasters International and 1995 World Champion in Public Speaking Mark Brown will be the guest speakers of the 3 day event.

Medical Biochemists' confab

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Academic Biochemists (Paab), a national society of academicians in the field of Medical Biochemistry and Nutrition, will hold its 15th Annual Scientific Convention from April 30 to May 1 at the Leisure Coast, Bonuan, Dagupan City, Pangasinan. With its theme "Biochemical Considerations in Infectious Diseases", the convention is timely because of the latest occurrences of several infectious entities. The convention is also open to non-members especially those in clinical practice dealing with such cases.

Multi-awarded youth



JOHN Ervic dela Paz De Gula, 12 years old son of Ermy and Vicky De Gula and brother of Ma. Vermy De Gula accomplish the highest award in primary level receiving a valedictorian medal from Saint Peter Academy of Kalookan in their 13th Commencement Exercises last March 19. Aside from being a recipient honor, he also bagged the 12 Special Awards in the category of: Best in English, Best in Math, Best in Science, Best in Civics, Best in Filipino, Best in Art, Best in Writing, Best in Extra-Curricular Activities, Most Honest, Most Thoughtful, Most Neat and Clean, Most Cooperative and Loyalty Award.

THE SHUTTLE BATTLE 2005 MOA SIGNING

The Shuttle Battle 2005 organizers and Phil. Badminton Assn. chair, Errol Chan signed a memorandum of agreement as their tournament director for their upcoming tournament on May 21 and 22 at the Olympic Badminton Club, Libis, Q.C. Seated (from left): Sheldon Villanueva, coach Errol Chan and Jane Alvarez. Standing (from left): Lia Villanueva, Chad Luis and Erica Pekson. Leveling Dates on May 7 and 8 from 1 to 6 p.m. For inquiries, call 0917-5299092 or 0919-4426312. Shuttle Battle 2005 is brought to you by PLDT-MyDSL, Fuji Films, PCSO, Tape Inc, Golds Gym, Inquirer, Smart and GMA-7.

City Garden Hotel offers affordable luxury

CITY Garden Hotel Makati is offering busy executives its first class amenities at attractive and affordable rates.

For as low as P1,350 per person on a twin-sharing basis, one can enjoy the hotel's tastefully elegant guest rooms and facilities, inclusive of a choice of free sumptuous buffet breakfast for two or a Spa service at the hotel's Body & Face by Mendez, free use of its open-air swimming pool at the Roofdeck and its fully equipped Gym.

Highlighting such an elegant but affordable accommodation are its Italian-inspired rooms with high-speed Internet and fax access ports, IDD/NDD telephone system, safety deposit box, well-stocked mini-bar, cable TV, 24-hour room service, and laundry and dry cleaning services.

Its Le Jardin Restaurant showcases a splendid array of international cuisine, while its Roofdeck Bar & Grill offers a relaxing ambience for busy executives to unwind.

The Gym, at the hotel's upper penthouse on the 23rd floor, offers local and foreign business executives a healthy alternative to keep fit while enjoying the magnificent view of the metropolis.

For those needing extra pampering, the Body & Face by Mendez at the hotel's penthouse level has US-sourced products and well-trained therapists and doctors who administer an array of refreshing and rejuvenating facial and body treatments, body massage, weight loss program, Botox, and other anti-aging and health care services at very affordable prices. For just a few extra pesos, guests can stay in one of the Asian-inspired Spa rooms inclusive of a Spa service, free use of the swimming pool and gym.

For meeting and conferences, City Garden Hotel Makati offers flexible meeting rooms for 10 to 120 persons, complete with conference/seminar facilities and professionally-staffed business center with Internet access, fax, and photocopiers, and such services as secretarial assistance, documentation, airline ticket reconfirmation, tours and transport booking, and postal and parcel handling, among others. Meetings packages come for as low as P9,750+ per day,

Accessibility is also not a problem as the hotel is just five minutes from the Rockwell and Glorietta malls and the Makati Commercial and Business District. As an added amenity, the hotel is offering free scheduled shuttle service (drop-off) to the Makati CBD every morning for its guests.

City Garden Hotel Makati is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City. For reservations or inquires, one can contact them at (02) 899-1111, or its domestic toll free number 1-800-101-GARDEN (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com .

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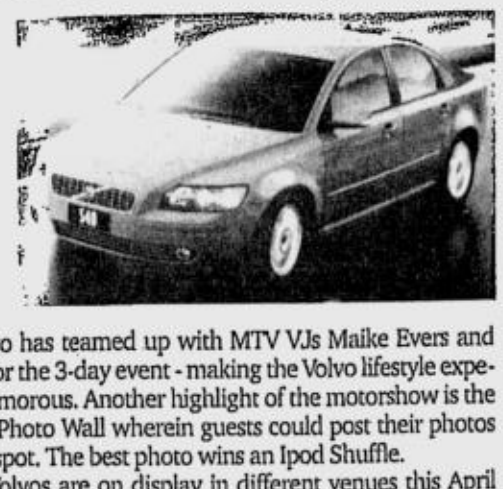

THE 1ST Manila Motor Show will present another face of Volvo to the local automotive enthusiasts. On April 28 to 30, auto aficionados will be treated to a different level of lifestyle offered by no less than the world's safest car company - Volvo. Volvo has teamed up with MTV VJs Maike Evers and Colby Miller, as hosts for the 3-day event - making the Volvo lifestyle experience fun, hip and glamorous. Another highlight of the motorshow is the "It Has to Be a Volvo" Photo Wall wherein guests could post their photos taken digitally on-the-spot. The best photo wins an Ipod Shuffle.

In the meantime, Volvos are on display in different venues this April with the full-model range available for clients at the Volvo Makati and Ortigas Showrooms. What is more, this is the best time to own a Volvo with the very attractive Ownership Packages. Driving home a Volvo S40 and V50 is made easier with the 0 percent interest, 20 percent down payment, 24 months to pay financing package while the Volvo S60 is available for a 0 percent interest, 30 percent down payment, 36 months to pay financing deal. Premium executive sedans and SUVs such as the S80, XC70, and XC90 can now be yours through the 0 percent interest, 50 percent down payment, 24 months to pay financing promo. Interested clients can take advantage of this attractive Ownership Packages until May 31. For inquiries, call 893-6621 to 22 (Makati) or 637-0414 to 17 (Ortigas).

TRANS-REGIONAL TRADE INITIATIVE

Asean to consider free trade pact with Europe

HANOI—Economic ministers from Southeast Asian nations ended a meeting in Vietnam Wednesday agreeing to study a potential free trade agreement (FTA) with the European Union, a joint statement said.

Ministers or senior officials from the 10 Asean countries met EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson in Halong city 170 kilometers (more than 100 miles) east of Hanoi Wednesday after talks among themselves the previous day.

The ministers discussed implementation of the "Trans-Regional EU-Asean Trade Initiative" and told Mandelson of its value in promoting regional integration as well as for "greater understanding between the two regions.

"These are important components not only in integrating Asean member countries but also in fostering Asean-EU economic cooperation, which would pave the way towards a closer . . . partnership," the statement said.

Mandelson for his part briefed the Asean ministers on the new EU generalized system of preferences but said that "because of some sensitivities, especially in the textile sector, the process has been delayed," it noted.

The European Union has been considering the launch of an investigation into soaring Chinese clothing imports after the ending of a global quota system on Jan. 1, while France has urged more immediate measures to protect European textile producers.

The European Commission, while facing pressure from the textile industry to act against Chinese imports, Brussels is wary of not moving too quickly for fear of stirring up a painful dispute at the World Trade Organization.

On Tuesday, the Southeast Asian ministers discussed implementation of the Asean Framework Agreement for the Integration of Priority Sectors.

Under it, measures are identified to enable the integration of agro-based products, air travel, automotive, e-Asean, electronics, fisheries, healthcare, rubber-based products, textile and clothing, tourism, and wood-based products.

The ministers also broached issues regarding economic co-operation with non-block members namely China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand to establish FTAs.

They noted that the region should examine the possible impacts of FTAs on integration plans and set up effective coordination to safeguard the interests of all members, especially the less advanced ones—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma (Myanmar.)

The Asean-China accord signed at the Vientiane summit in December will start on July 1.

The two sides will have to start cutting tariffs on certain types of goods to between zero and five percent by 2010 for Southeast Asia's six more economically advanced members and by 2015 for Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar. AFP

China growth to slow in '05, WB says

WASHINGTON—China's economy is heading for a soft landing although there is a good deal of uncertainty about the next stage of its economic cycle, the World Bank said on Wednesday.

Recent data had sent sometimes contradictory signals, but the figures were "evidence that the economy is heading for a soft landing . . . and a gradual deceleration to a more sustainable and balanced growth path," the development lender said.

It said data had shown a sharp slowdown in the pace of credit and investment, while growth was now more a product of exports and private consumption.

The World Bank said Chinese economic growth should slow to 8.3 percent this year and to 7.5 percent in 2006, rates that "largely embody the soft-landing view."

The economy grew 9.5 percent in 2004, the strongest pace since 1996, Chinese data showed.

In a twice-yearly update on East Asia and Pacific economies, the World Bank also said a more flexible exchange rate policy would help China better manage capital flows and steer monetary policy more towards domestic goals.

Weekend comments by top Chinese officials sparked fresh market speculation Beijing was ready to revalue the currency.

The comments came after the United States had increased pressure on Beijing to relax the yuan's peg to the dollar.

Central Bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan told Reuters on Saturday there were no serious political or technical obstacles to reform, but the timetable for any change was still under review.

As China's foreign exchange reserves soared by a record $206 billion in 2004 and trade balances shifted into a large surplus, Beijing resisted pressure to change its currency policy but announced measures to encourage capital outflows, the bank said.

Given China's already fragile domestic financial system, the World Bank said it may be more appropriate for Beijing to move slowly in further liberalizing its capital account.

But the World Bank said the country's economy—the seventh largest in the world but by some measures the second largest—required some major adjustments, including reforms to fix its weak financial sector, very low real interest rates and upward pressure on monetary and credit aggregates. *Reuters*

Oil supply enough, Opec leaders say

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad—The oil ministers of Iran and the United Arab Emirates said Tuesday that oil markets are well supplied despite crude prices hovering well over $50 a barrel.

"The oil market is well supplied. It may be oversupplied," said Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh. He was in Trinidad with fellow Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries oil ministers from the UAE and Qatar for a natural gas exporters conference.

"If you need more oil, we'll give you more," UAE Oil Minister Mohamed al-Hamili said.

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah, the de facto leader of Opec's top producing nation, met on Monday with US President George W. Bush in Texas to discuss oil prices, which are up about 25 percent since the start of the year.

After the meeting, Adel al-Jubeir, a foreign affairs adviser to the crown prince, said world oil supplies were adequate, but the kingdom was willing to provide more crude quickly.

Crude supplies in the United States, the world's largest energy consumer, are near three-year highs as Opec has boosted production, according to US government data.

Oil tanker tracker Petrologistics said Tuesday that Opec producers were pumping 30.4 million barrels per day, up 700,000 bpd from March. Opec is looking to boost global oil stocks in the second quarter ahead of an expected summer demand surge.

And Opec expects to raise production to near 25-year highs next month, President Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah said last week.

He said top Opec producer Saudi Arabia was expected to provide most of an Opec 500,000 bpd hike next month.

US oil prices have dropped more than $4 a barrel since hitting a record of $58.28 a barrel this month on strong Asian demand, tanker and refinery bottlenecks, and big money fund speculation.

US oil futures settled at $54.20 a barrel on Tuesday on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

High prices could be blamed in part on US refinery capacity, said Saudi Arabia's Jubeir.

"What we see is a shortage of refining capacity" in the United States, which has not built a refinery from the ground up since the 1970s.

Iran, the cartel's second leading producer, said Opec cannot be blamed for high oil prices.

"We've done everything we can do," said Iran's Zanganeh. "The market should not expect everything to be done by Opec."

Qatar's oil minister, Abdullah al-Attiyah, said on Monday the United States should raise its refinery capacity and adopt national fuel specifications instead of separate state plans.

Opec's acting secretary general, Adnan Shihab-Eldin, said on Tuesday that oil prices much above $50 a barrel would start to hurt world economic growth.

"I think that if you go above $50 significantly, you will begin to see response measures that may impact the growth in the world economy," Shihab-Eldin told BBC's HardTalk program. *Reuters*

KEN Ryan, left, CEO of Jetstar Asia Airways and chief captain Peter Doughen, right, wave with their Singaporean flight stewardess upon arrival of the plane, an Airbus A320 during its inaugural flight yesterday at Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Jetstar Asia Airways, the low-budget carrier operated by Australia's Qantas Airways Ltd., will become the third discount airline to operate in the Philippines, servicing the Manila-Singapore route. AP

Invitation for

Expression of Interest

Private Sector Participation in

National Power Corporation – Small Power Utilities Group

NPC – SPUG

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the support of its appointed transaction advisor, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is inviting private sector participation through long-term concession agreements, in electricity generation in the off-grid areas of the Philippines. As a first step, it has identified three off-grid areas, namely **Marinduque, Tablas** and **Romblon**, with a combined capacity of 15 MW, as pilots to conduct a competitive selection process to be held in June, 2005.

Interested parties are requested to submit a formal Expression of Interest, including a brief profile of their Company, to be received at the address below along with a registration fee of Php5,000 made payable to the National Power Corporation. Once registered, they will be given an information memorandum and other documents relating to the program's investment opportunity. Registration starts on April 27, 2005.

Sanjay Grewal
Program Manager
International Finance Corporation (IFC)

11th Floor, Tower One
Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave.
Makati City, Philippines
Tel: (63-2) 848-7333
Fax: (63-2) 848-7339
E-mail: sgrewal@ifc.org

This advertisement is not intended to be, and should not be construed as any representation or warranty, express or implied, with respect to any statement made herein.

EIB SAVINGS BANK, INC.
Cebu South Road, Barangay Bulacao, Talisay Cebu City
STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 28,2005

		AMOUNT
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	663,788
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		973,012
Due from Other Banks		2,372,447
Investments in bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		55,989,396
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		7,434,440
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures, & Equipments (Net)		2,361,307
Others		91,293
TOTAL ASSETS	P	69,885,683
LIABILITIES		
Savings Deposits	P	718,135
Time Deposits		332,744
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		672,377
Other Liabilities		565,569
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	2,288,825
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	50,000,000
Surplus		17,596,858
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	67,596,858
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	69,885,683

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of:		
a.Governments	P	-
b.Banks		2,399,522
c.Trust Department		-
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
Prescribed		
Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	29.95%	0.00%
3. Amount of non-performing loans		-
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		0.00%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets		-
6. General provision for loan losses		-
7. Specific provision for loan losses		-
8. Return on equity (ROE)		1.93%
9. Amount of DOSR loans/advances		-
10. Ration of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio		0.00%
11. Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances		-
12. Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total portfolio		0.00%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I / WE, *Alex A. Pimentel* and *Benjamin P. Castillo* of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.)ALEX A. PIMENTEL
President

(Sgd.) BENJAMIN P. CASTILLO
Chairman

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 22 day of April, 2005, affiant exhibiting to me his/her/their/ Community Tax NO. 13809151, issued at Cebu on January 19, 2005 and Community Tax no. 09155900 issued at Manila on January 03,2005

Doc. No. 147
Page No. 31
Book No. II
Series of 2005

Notary Public

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT STOCK CERT. NO. 0031 ISSUED BY BATULAO GOLF & MOUNTAIN RESORT, INC. FOR ONE (1) SHARE OF ITOCHI CORPORATION HAS BEEN DECLARED LOST. IF NO CONTEST IS RECEIVED NEW CERTIFICATE WILL BE ISSUED.(PDI APR. 28, MAY 5, 12, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late EMMANUEL S. ATILANO was extrajudicially settled by the heirs on April 12, 2005 as per Doc. No. 270, Page 55, Book 41-4, Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Lope M. Velasco of Pasig City.
(PDI - April 14, 21 and 28, 2005)

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the DECEASED FRANCISCO ORTEGA, JR., who died intestate on FEB 22, 2000, and the deceased ZOE B. ORTEGO, who died also intestate on JAN. 19, 2005, was adjudicated by their only heir KATHERINE B. ORTEGO by virtue of an affidavit of self-adjudication executed and acknowledged before ATTY. PABLO S. CASTILLO, Notary Public, and entered in his notarial record as Doc. No. 006, Page No 002, Book No. I, Series of 2005.
(PDI - APR. 21, 28 & MAY 5, 2005)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-116	30 units Bill Counter, Portable Type	P 890,400.00	LBP Funds
	6 units Bill Counter, Console Type	639,180.00	LBP Funds
	7 units Calculator, Electronic, Desktop	21,900.00	LBP Funds
	33 units Pocket Calculator, 14 digits	11,880.00	LBP Funds
	6 units Coin Counter	413,400.00	LBP Funds
	4 units Facsimile Machine	24,800.00	LBP Funds
	7 units Manual Typewriter	95,800.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on **May 25, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.** and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **May 13, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the **Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.**

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI–April 28 & May 5, 2005)

HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Pag-IBIG FUND is inviting qualified Contractors/Suppliers to Apply for Eligibility and Bid for the following requirements:

Item No.	Particulars	Agency Budget Ceiling	Cost of bid Documents (Non-Refundable)	Schedule of Pre-bid Conference
I	Supply, Delivery and Installation of Wide Area Network (3-year Lease-to-Own)	P 35,894,740.00	P 7,000.00	May 11, 2005 1:30 p.m.
II	Supply and Delivery of various Network Equipment for Pag-IBIG Branch and Regional Offices (LAN Upgrade)	P 17,528,867.00	P3,500.00	May 13, 2005 1:30 p.m.

Documentary Requirements, Terms of Reference and Bid Forms may be obtained from the Procurement Section, Task Force-General Services 7th floor Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Ave., Makati City starting April 21, 2005.

Submission of Documentary Requirements and Opening of Bid Proposals shall be conducted at Room 602, 6th Floor, Pag-IBIG Fund Multi-Purpose Hall, The Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Ave., Makati City, as follows:

Item No.	Schedule of Opening of Bids (tentative)	
I	May 25, 2005;	1:30 p.m.
II	May 27, 2005;	1:30 p.m.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government. Further, the Fund assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Mr. Carlos A. Latorre/Mr. Jose Maria M. Diaz/Mr. Cesar V. Racoma at 811-42-62, 894-58-95 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at hdmfgpis@info.com.ph.

(Sgd.) **EMMA LINDA B. FARIA**
Senior Vice President, Technical Support Group
Chair, BAC-GS

(PDI--April 21 & 28, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE OF LOSS
Notice is hereby given that BOI Certificate of Registration No. 88-0426 issued on 22 June 1988 as New Export Producer of Furniture & Novelty Items in-laid with Stone under the name of STONEWELL INTERIORS INC. was lost

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CAMPOS, LANUZA & CO., INC.

NOTICE

To: All clients of CAMPOS, LANUZA & CO., INC

Notice is hereby given to all clients of CAMPOS, LANUZA & CO., INC.; to come to our office for proper identification, on or before June 1, 2005, and accomplish all necessary documents needed to update their personal information and trading instructions unless otherwise directed by the latter, and to settle any credit/debit balance on their respective accounts.

This updating is initiated to ensure proper delivery and recording of all future confirmations, notices, dividends, subscriptions, rights, splits, etc. After the above mentioned date, CAMPOS, LANUZA & CO., INC. shall not be held responsible or liable for any confirmations, notices, dividends, subscriptions, rights, splits, etc. that are not delivered due to insufficient or inaccurate information.

For all unclaimed shares and dividends thereof, CAMPOS, LANUZA & CO., INC. will charge a service fee for the maintenance of these accounts and all unpaid/unclaimed subscriptions will be forfeited and/or disposed for payments.

Our new business address is at 2002B East Tower Philippine Stock Exchange, Ortigas, Pasig City. For more details, please contact Mr. Malaya Laraya or Ms. Dolly Ventunna at telephone number (02) 634-6881

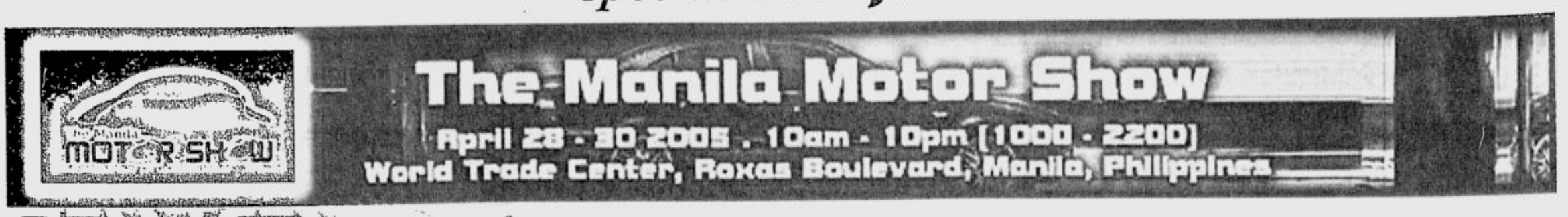
(PDI–April 28, 2005)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Malampaya Development Project will offer the following items for public sale at its Batangas Warehouse located in the Port of Batangas:

- Scrap metal
- Mokveld valve and heat exchanger
- Used office equipments
- Used computer equipments
- Electrical items and offer misc. items

Bidders may receive a complete list of items and bid form. To inspect the items please call Telephone No. (043) 723-0302



The first Manila Motor Show roars off

WORLDBEX Services International (WSI) will pull all stops to ensure the success of the 1st Manila International Motor Show happening today until April 30, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., at The World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. The inaugural show is the first international-quality motor show that will bear the Philippine capital's name.

The Manila International Motor Show will encompass the entire 5,000-sqm space of both World Trade Center exhibition halls and will be home to these major brands: BMW, Chrysler, Dodge, Ferrari, Ford, Hummer, Hyundai, Isuzu, Jeep, Kia, Land Rover, Mazda, Maserati, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Nissan (Universal Motors Corp), Peugeot, Ssyang Yong, Toyota, and Volvo. With the cooperation of local car manufacturers and distributors, 2005 model year vehicles will be displayed along with some future cars, special vehicles, classics and concept cars.

No less than 10 new models will have their debut during the event: BMW's 3 Series; Chrysler's 300C and Town & Country; Dodge Durango; Hyundai's Getz, Matrix CRDi, Sonata and Tucson; Mercedes-Benz CLS-Class; and Peugeot 307 SW and 807 van. Special vehicles like Toyota's Formula One car, Ford's WRC-inspired Focus Rally Car, Mazda's RX-8, plus a plethora of classic cars are expected to draw crowds too.

Mercedes-Benz recently celebrated 50 years of its venerable SL model and its Philippine distributor CATS Motors Inc will exhibit several generations of the SL line up. This includes its current-model descendant, the SL 350, which converts from hardtop to coupe in a matter of seconds.

Not to be outdone, BMW will display a historical line up of the inimitable 3 Series starting from a classic 1975 model BMW 3 Series to the all-new 330i and 320i. BMW celebrates its 30th anniversary of the 3 Series and an elaborate display of this iconic sports sedan will be part of their exhibition.

Mitsubishi will display a full line up of the powerful Lancer Evolution starting from Evo I to Evo VIII. Other brands like Ford will be displaying the oldest Ford in the Philippines, a circa 1930 Model-A alongside some thoroughbred classic Mustangs.

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The event will also give its visitors a chance to try these various models with special test drives around the World Trade Center. Ford will even have a special off-road track built for people to try out the abilities of their No Boundaries family SUVs. Other activities include off-road demonstrations, quarter-mile challenges and various seminars on road safety and awareness. Special offers on new vehicle purchases as well as hourly raffles and other giveaways await all car enthusiasts.

With the 1st Manila International Motor Show, the organizers aspire to enhance industry cooperation and provide a stimulus to spur demand for the automotive industry.

Visitors who pay P50 entrance also join WSI in the "Panaghoy Ng Mga Bata", a fundraising project led by Cesar Montano and other prominent celebrities for the education and health needs of the families affected by the recent Bohol mass poisoning.

WSI recently staged the 10th Anniversary of Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition or Worldbex with over 800 exhibitors on a five-day show run in World Trade Center last March. With the same conviction and panache, the Manila Motor Show looks forward to an exciting start.

LOOK for the Nissan workhorses Patrol (top) and Frontier (above) at the 1st Manila Motor Show

MESSAGES

MY WARMEST felicitations to the organizer, participants and guests of the 1st Manila Motor Show on April 28-30 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

As the first Motor Show in Manila, this event will bring together various stakeholders, prime-movers, entrepreneurs, agents, sports personalities, enthusiasts and hobbyists in the automotive industry. It will showcase the latest trends and developments in automotive business and state-of-the-art technology, which will raise the awareness of the public for greater market opportunities and transfer of technologies.

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) recognizes the holding of the First Manila Motor Show as an opportunity to promote business, which will boost the country as a viable investment haven for the automobile industry.

In behalf of the Department of Transportation and Communications, my congratulations to the men and women of Worldbex Services International (WSI) for spearheading this exhibit.

MABUHAY!

LEANDRO R. MENDOZA (Sgd.)
Secretary
Department of Transportation and Communications

CONGRATULATIONS to our fellow exhibitors and the organizers of the first Manila Motor Show. As members of the country's automotive industry, we have always sought to promote the formidable capabilities of our local manufacturers, distributors, and automotive suppliers. This motor show is one activity that fulfils such objective.

The show presents more than a hundred vehicles available through the legitimate market. This means safe, high-quality cars that provide their owners with lasting value. Moreover, they support our country's economy in more ways than one. We welcome all the automotive consumers and car enthusiasts to the show. Thank you for your support for the country's automotive industry.

ELIZABETH H. LEE (Sgd.)
President
Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines

GREETINGS!

As the first of its kind among transport shows, the Manila Motor Show (MMS) is a milestone the Truck Manufacturers' Association (TMA) of the Philippines is excited about.

The TMA is appreciative of the support the MMS has given the local automotive industry and applauds its endeavour to create a more exciting market for all. The MMS is a true first with the first Car of the Year Awardees on display, plus a feast of past, current, and future cars from local OEMs and other foreign manufacturers, this is truly an event worth the visit. The great collection of vehicles present makes the MMS a fitting brother to the Tokyo, Seoul, and Bangkok Motor Shows.

With the "Gateway to Asia" inaugural theme, the MMS recognizes the Philippines to be a fast growing hub of exported vehicle parts and completely built-up units. No longer are we simply suppliers to the local market, but our reach spans the region. And as the MMS opens our country to our neighbours it also speaks highly of our capability to walk abreast the best in Asia.

Kudos to the MMS!

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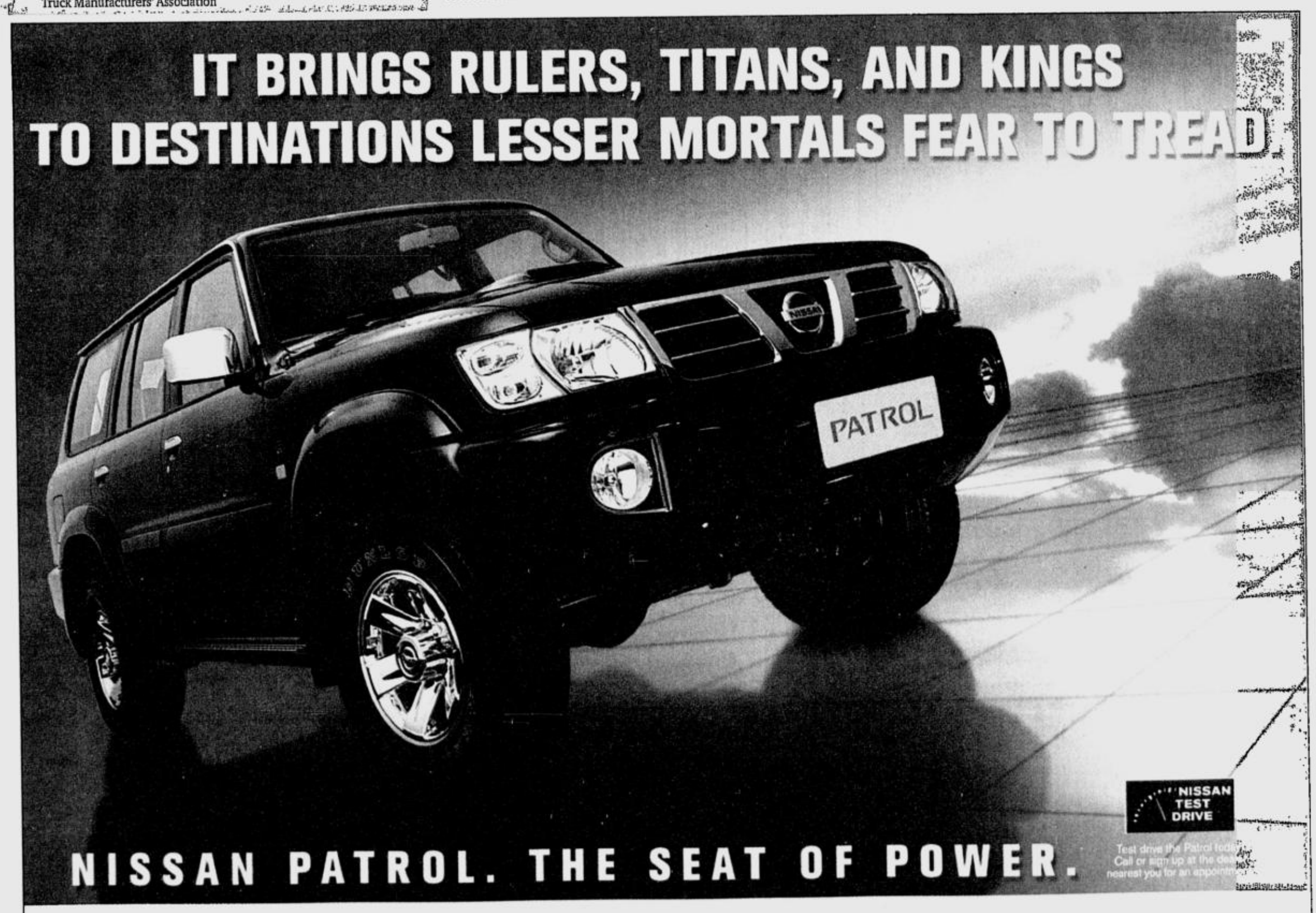

PATROL

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METRO MANILA DEALERS: CORE AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCES INC. (Makati) Tel. Nos. 810-0161 / 812-7538 / 818-4598 / 892-6217 • MANTRADE DEVELOPMENT CORP. (Makati) Tel. Nos. 843-3316 to 23 / 843-8011 / 812-7701 • NISSAN GALLERY-ORTIGAS Tel. Nos. 633-2545 / 635-5888 / 438-4539 • NISSAN NORTH EDSA Tel. Nos. 455-8980 / 330-5331 to 60 • NISSAN COMMONWEALTH, INC. Tel. Nos. 932-0428 / 932-4001 • BROADWAY MOTOR SALES, INC. Tel. Nos. 525-9061 to 64 / 400-1522 / 400-1020 / 400-2177 / 404-2439 • NISSAN WESTGATE (Alabang) Tel. Nos. 772-1826 / 775-0236 / 755-0239 / 775-0523 • *LUZON DEALERS*: NISSAN SOUTHWOODS Tel. Nos. 699-2400 to 02 / (049) 241-3040 / (046) 430-1683 to 84 • LISAM ENTERPRISES, INC. Tel. Nos. (054) 472-3577 to 79 • WORLD CARS, INC. (Baluag) Tel. Nos. (044) 766-0492 / 766-0191 / 673-1200 • NISSAN PAMPANGA Tel. Nos. (045) 961-5481 / 961-5461 to 62 • ROYCE MOTOR CENTER, INC. (Cabanatuan City) Tel. Nos. (044) 463-7210 to 12 (Isabela) Tel. Nos. (078) 682-8701 / 682-6707 (San Fernando) Tel. Nos. (045) 961-7773 to 74 • *VISAYAS DEALERS*: S & J MOTORS, INC. Tel. Nos. (033) 320-4051 to 54 • ILOILO CAR CORPORATION Tel. Nos. (033) 320-2248 / 320-2064 • PO'S MARKETING ENT., INC. Tel. Nos. (034) 435-1102 / 434-8051 to 52 / 434-8530 / 433-2907 / 433-0562 / 67 • NISSAN CEBU DISTRIBUTORS, INC. Tel. Nos. (032) 346-8422 to 25 / 345-0006 to 07 / 346-0350 / 345-1124 / 346-8430 to 31 / 345-1450 • *MINDANAO DEALERS*: NISSAN CAGAYAN DE ORO DISTRIBUTORS, INC. Tel. Nos. (08822) 732-672 / 733-444 / (088) 856-3558 • DAVAO UNICAR CORPORATION (Davao City) Tel. Nos. (082) 221-1914 / 16 / 18 / 227-0308 to 09 • DAVAO UNICAR CORPORATION (General Santos City) Tel. No. (083) 552-3228

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The Manila Motor Show
April 28 - 30 2005 : 10am - 10pm (1000 - 2200)
World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines

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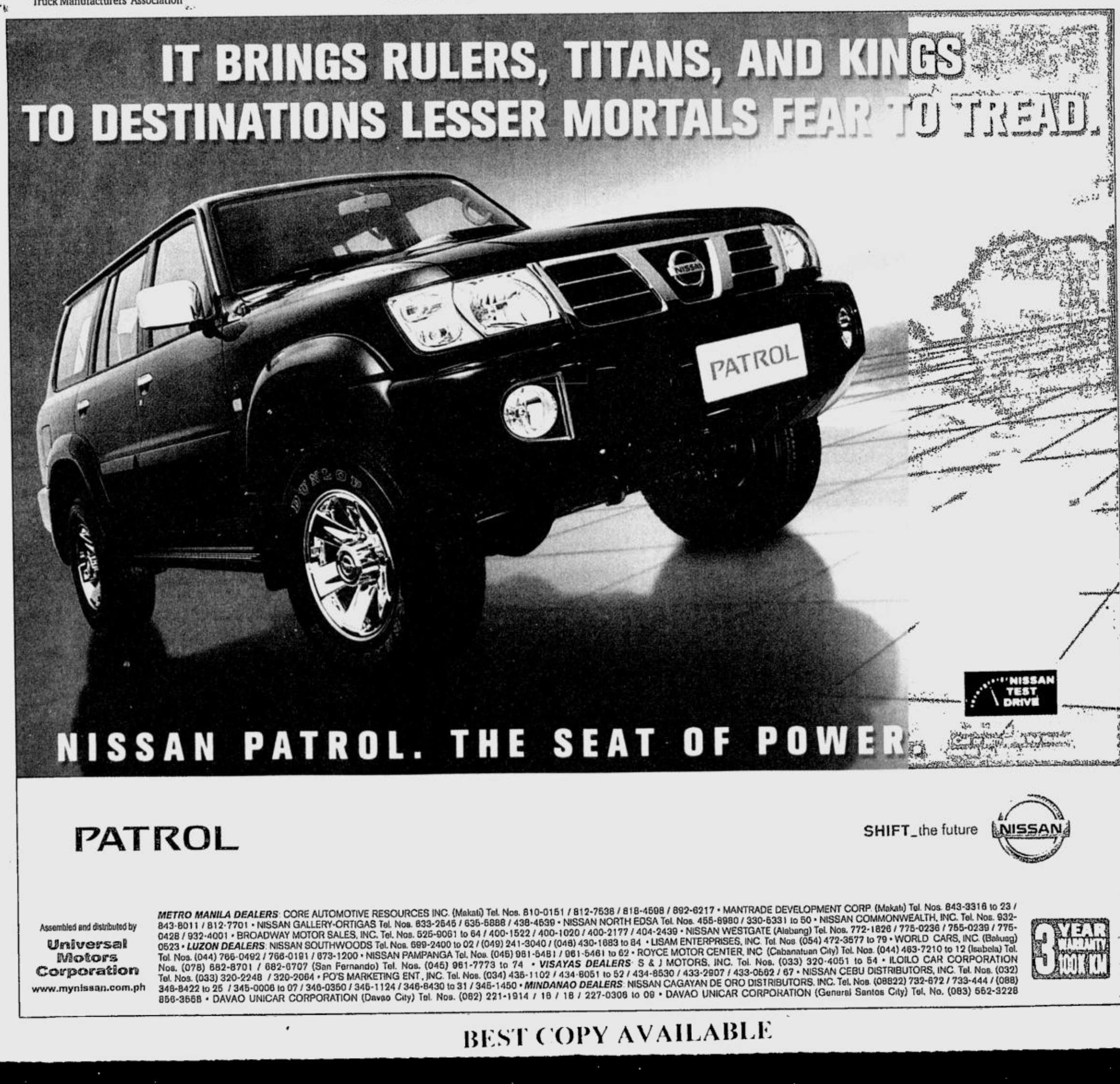

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **May 24, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila**, among all interested rice suppliers for the **supply of maximum 300,000 MT, 5% MOLSO non-iron fortified long grain white rice, 25% brokens and 100,000 MT, 5% MOLSO iron fortified long grain white rice, 5%, 15% and 25% brokens in 50 kilograms net capacity polypropylene bags** with an appropriated budget of **Php5.40B** for non-iron fortified and **Php2.03B** for iron fortified rice, from corporate resources. **Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.** Breakdown as follows:

VOLUME (MT) 5% MOLSO	COMMODITY SPECIFICATION
300,000 non-iron fortified (mandatory bid)	25% brokens
100,000 iron fortified (optional bid)	5%, 15% and 25% brokens

Price offers shall be on CFR, FO and FOB basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of ninety (90) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of a mandatory countertrade commitment and countertrade performed on best effort. All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for the non-iron fortified rice which is a mandatory bid Otherwise, bids will be considered non-responsive. Arrival period for both non-iron and iron fortified rice shall be as follows:

Arrival Period	Percentage of Volume to be Offered
A. NON-IRON FORTIFIED	
Not Later Than June 2005	At least 35%
Not Later Than July 2005	At least 35%
Not Later Than August 2005	Balance
B. IRON FORTIFIED	
Not Later Than 15 July 2005	At least 50%
Not Later Than 15 August 2005	Balance

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within **the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:**

SUPPLIER	IRON-FORTIFIED	NON-IRON FORTIFIED
government (with good track record)	max. 100,000 MT	max. 250,000 MT
private (with good track record)	max. 30,000 MT	max. 30,000 MT
government/private (without track record)	max. 15,000 MT	max. 15,000 MT

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. The vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank. Bid bond can be converted to performance bond.

List of Eligibility Requirements and instructions to bidders may be secured starting **28 April 2005** thru **MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ,** Assistant Department Manager and **MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO,** Division Chief III, **Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.**

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **April 28 to May 17, 2005** (8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The **pre-bidding conference** will be held on **May 10, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.** at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.**

Submission of bids will be on May 24, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids** will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - April 28 & May 5, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
PORT OF MANILA
Customs District II-A
South Harbor, Manila

12 April 2005

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601, other related provisions of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines and CMO 5-2003, there will be a PUBLIC AUCTION SALE (Sealed Bidding) to be conducted at the Office of Auction and Cargo Disposal Division, Room No. 304, Customhouse Bldg., South Harbor, Port Area, Manila on **May 6, 2005** of the hereunder listed Vehicles. Said item/goods shall be available for public viewing on **May 5, 2005.**

In the event of failed bidding, the same shall be offered in a second auction to be held on the third business day following the first failed bidding at the same time and place with no reduction of the floor price and without need for further advertisement, except as to perishable items, which may be auctioned again on the following business day. When at least two of the sealed bids submitted in an auction fall within ten (10%) percent of the highest bid, the same should be above the floor price (clustering). Those in the cluster shall immediately go into an open bidding with the highest sealed bid serving as the new floor price of the lot being sold.

The winning bidders shall be required to pay 50% of the bid price either in cash and/or manager's check (Payable to PNB only) at the end of the bidding. For meritorious reason, said bidder may be allowed to make such payment not later than two (2) hours from the awarding of the won bid. The remaining balance of 50% of the bid price shall be paid within the next business day.

IMPORTANT:

Only registered bidders who have paid the Registration Fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) and Cash Bond (Refundable) of Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) are eligible to participate in the auction sale.

Registration starts 1:30 pm and will close at 2:00 pm.

For further inquiry, please contact the following telephone number 528-60-00 local 459.

Sale Lot No. 022-05	: Two (2) units used BMW 325i (LHD) Hydraumatic
FSD ENT.	: Transmission '84 model, color white, complete
1st Advertisement	: accessories, roof dented 4 dr.
S.I. No. 2002-058 & 2002-057	"AS IS WHERE IS"
Floor Price: Php227,125.35/unit	: Location: Warehouse No. 1
Sale Lot No. 023-05	: One (1) unit used MERCEDES BENZ (LHD)
FSD ENT.	: Hydraumatic Transmission 190e, 4 dr.
1st Advertisement	:
S.I. No. 2002-058 & 2002-057	"AS IS WHERE IS"
Floor Price: Php343,101.02	: Location: Warehouse No. 1

(Sgd.) Atty. **RONNIE C. SILVESTRE**
District Collector

(PDI - April 28, 2005)

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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PD Ref. No.: PB050329-EL0019

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR HEAD OFFICE**, wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF JET A-1 AVIATION FUEL (FOR ONE YEAR)

TOTAL ABC: P14,117,000.00

1. Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting **April 19, 2005 to May 17, 2005** at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00)** per set.
2. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before **10:00 a.m of May 18, 2005** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date is declared non-working day, the new deadline for submission shall be announced through a Bid Bulletin. Submission of documents must be clear, legible and readable. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
3. Pre-bid conference will be held on **May 9, 2005 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
4. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
5. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
6. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI - March 17 & 28, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with Republic Act 9184, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting an ocean freight bidding (OFB) on May 24, 2005 at 11:00 AM at the FDC Lecture Room No. 1, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila among all Philippine Shipping Companies registered under Philippine Laws and accredited by Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to transport/ferry 400,000 MT, 5% more or less rice imports with an appropriated budget from NFA's corporate resources of FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY MILLION PESOS (Php 580 M). Details, as follows:

	ARRIVAL PERIOD
A. **300,000 MT, 5% MOL Non-Iron Fortified Rice in bags of 50 kg net of THAILAND, VIETNAM, CHINA, AUSTRALIA, PAKISTAN and/or US origin;**	**AT LEAST 35% JUNE 2005 AT LEAST 35% JULY 2005 BALANCE 30% AUGUST 2005**
B. **100,000 MT,5% MOL Iron Fortified Rice in bags of 50 kg net of THAILAND, VIETNAM, CHINA, AUSTRALIA, PAKISTAN and/or US Origin**	**AT LEAST 50% JULY 15, 2005 BALANCE AUG. 15, 2005**

Maximum volume to be offered per vessel shall be 15,000 MT

All interested offerors are required to submit bid offers in US Dollars per gross metric ton, Free In and Out stowed and Trimmed (FIOST) basis, one loading port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths and one discharging port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths, as specified in the NFA Ocean Freight Bid Terms.

Likewise, all interested offerors are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 2.5% of the highest value of the offered freight in the form of Cashier's and/ or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a reputable commercial bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 2.5% of the value of the awarded freight offer within three (3) banking days after receipt of the Notice of Award in the form of Cashier's and/or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instruction to Bidders may be secured thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Manager, Department for Marketing Operations, 5th Flr., NFA Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City, Telephone Nos. 712-1564, 743-86-96 or 712-3341 Loc. 8513 starting April 28, 2005.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) detailing the conditions of the bid and Offer Sheets will likewise be available starting April 28 up to May 17, 2005 (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) upon payment of a Php7,500.00 non-refundable fee.

The **OFB- Pre-Bidding** conference will be held on **May 10, 2005,** at **2:00 PM** at the FDC Lecture Room, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of eligibility requirements, technical proposal and price offers will be between 9:00 AM to 10:55 AM at the FDC Lecture Room, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila on **May 24, 2005. Opening of bids** will start at exactly **11:00 AM.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator
and Chairman, BAC

(PDI - April 28 & May 5, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
SALE OF ASSETS

The assets are being offered on an "as-is, where-is" basis, at the Indicative Prices presented below, Sealed bids/offers shall be received at 3:00 p.m. on the following schedules at PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

1. **PUBLIC BIDDING**

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (in Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Radio Philippine Network (RPN) Various machinery and equipment, furniture and office equipment located at Broadcast City, Diliman, Quezon City	P106,714.00	May 10, 2005

2. **OFFER FOR SALE**

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (in Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Atlas Development and Steel Industries, Inc. Land, buildings and improvements located at Jenny's Avenue, Rosario, Pasig City	P26,945,000.00	May 12, 2005
Davao Timber Corp. Land (11,948 sq.m.) and all improvements thereon located along Binuangan, Maco, Compostela Valley Province	P1,549,000.00	May 17, 2005

Interested parties may secure the sale documents from the PMO Marketing Dept. at non-refundable fees of P300.00 for RPN, P500.00 for Atlas and P500.00 for Davao Timber.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department.

For more information, please contact the PMO Marketing Dept. at telephone nos. 817-6331; 817-8762; 818-4733; 892-21-45 fax no. 818-0906.

(PDI–April 27, 28 & 29, 2005)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Republic of the Philippines

Name of Project : Operation & Maintenance of MEZ STP/WRF
Location of Project : Mactan Economic Zone, Lapu-lapu City

Provision for necessary personnel to operate and maintain the STP/WRF on a 24-hour basis; periodic clean up and maintenance of reuse water distribution system and sewerage collection system; installation of water meter to potential users; upkeep and cleanliness of the facilities, among others.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority, through the Mactan Economic Zone (MEZ) through the Corporate Budget for the contract approved by the governing Board intends to apply the sum of Php 2.8 million being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Operation & Maintenance of MEZ STP/WRP. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The MEZ now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for Operation & Maintenance of MEZ STP/WRF. Expected contract duration is for one (1) year. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the MEZ and inspect the bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8 AM to 5 PM.

BAC Secretariat
2nd Floor, MEZ Administration Bldg.
Mactan Economic Zone, Lapu-lapu City

Interested Bidders may purchase the complete set of Bidding Documents from 20 April to 06 May, 2005 at the above mentioned address upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of PhP 2,500.00. The method of payment will be in cash only. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

The MEZ will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties at 10 AM on 06 May, 2005 at the Conference Hall, 2nd Floor, MEZ Administration Building, Lapu-lapu City.

Bids and Eligibility requirements must be delivered to the MEZ-BAC at the 2nd Floor MEZ Administration Building, Lapu-lapu City on or before 10 AM, 24 May 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount as specified in the Bid Data Sheet or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on 24 May 2005 at 2 PM, Conference Hall, 2nd Floor, MEZ Administration Building Lapu-lapu City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address above.

In case any of the abovementioned dates is declared as a non-working holiday, it will be reset on the next working day

The MEZ reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to contract award, without hereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE
Mr. SANSALUNA A. PINAGAYAO
Zone Administrator
Mactan Economic Zone, Lapu-lapu City
Tel. No. (032) 340-0595 Fax No. (032) 340-0591
Web address: www.peza.gov.ph

(Sgd.) BELENIA B. LOBITAÑA
MEZ BAC – Chairperson

(PDI – April 21 & 28, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Land Reform
Foreign Assisted Projects Office
Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project II
CENTRAL PROJECT OFFICE

DAR

ERRATUM: INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID (ARISP II-DLR)

In view of the observance of the four-day work week for government office for the period April-May 2005, the following corrections in the dates in the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid as published on April 27, 2005, are made:

- Closing date and time for submission of eligibility requirements shall be on 23 May 2005; 12:00 P.M., Manila Time to the DLR-FAPsO, Administrative Unit, 2nd Floor, FAPsO Building, Department of Land Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Pre-qual Assessment, Evaluation and Inspection of Sites: 1:30 P.M. onwards, Manila.
- Letter of Notice to Eligible Bidders shall be issued on 30 May 2005.
- Bid Documents shall be issued to Eligible Bidders on June 6-10, 2005.
- Closing Date and Time of submission of bids is 27 June 2005 at 9:00 A.M. Bids will be opened in the presence of participating bidders on the same day at 9:30 A.M., FAPsO Conference Room, 4th Floor, FAPsO Building, DLR Compound.

All documents pertaining to the tender are available at DLR-FAPsO, Administrative Unit, FAPsO Bldg., DLR Compd., Elliptical Rd., Diliman, Quezon City, with Telephone No. 928-62-68 and Fax No. 454-1983.

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that BOI Certificate of Registration No. VII 91-035 issued on 28 January 1992 as Existing Sub-Contractor of Rattan, Buri Furniture, Parts & Handicrafts and BOI Certificate of Registration No. 77-669 issued on 23 January 1977 as Export Producer of Rattan and Buri Furniture on a Non Pioneer Status under the name of NORKIS INTERNATIONAL CO., INC. were lost.

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN
Municipality of Amulung
OFFICE OF THE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government of Amulung thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites all interested and qualified suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the procurement and delivery of the item mentioned below:

ITEM : One (1) Farm Tractor, Engine- Diesel, Type – Natural Aspirated
Size of Tire : 14.9 x 24 front, 184 x 34 rear.
Trailing Harrow : 20 x 24 HD
Display : 4 26 Heavy Duty: Drive 4-wheel, Cylinder- 4, Horse Power : 9
Spareparts : Should be available in the locality
Performance : 1 hr/ha. 400 ha./season

APROVED Budget of the Contract (ABC) - P2,392,382.41

Source of Fund – General Fund

Schedule of Activities:

April 27 to May 10, 2005	– Publication in the newspaper of general circulation, posting in the GEPS, BAC Bulletin and various conspicuous places
May 11 to June 9, 2005	– Preparation of Bids (Deadline of submission of eligibility Requirements- June 9, 2005 at 5pm)
May 30, 2005	– Pre-Bid Conference
June 10, 2005	– Eligibility Checking, Receipt and Opening of Bids (at 1:30pm)

Prospective bidders should have experience in similar undertaking with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed item/project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Evaluation of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/fail criteria. Post Evaluation of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

The Committee will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms upon submission of the letter of intent and upon payment of a non-refundable fees and costs of bid forms. The Eligibility Requirements shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat, LGU, Amulung, Cagayan.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security , Pre-bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

The Local Government of Amulung reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein and to accept bids considered responsive and most advantageous to the government

Bid documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Amulung, Cagayan, starting May 11, 2005 upon payment of prescribed fees.

Details of bid items are posted in the web site at the GEPS, BAC Bulletin.

(Sgd.) **LUZMINDA L. MACASIO**
BAC Chairman

Noted:
(Sgd.) **ATTY. NICANOR C. DE LEON**
Municipal Mayor

(PDI– April 28 & May 5, 2005)

PMAP, University of Makati partner for HR development program

THE HUMAN Resource Management Development Center (HRMDC) of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) partners with University of Makati in holding a certificate course in Human Resource Development to equip the participants with the relevant knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the exercise of the human resource development functions. PMAP and the faculty of University of Makati designed the Certificate in Human Resource Development (CHRD) course, which will run for eight Saturdays starting May 7 to June 25 at the Graduate School Building of University of Makati in West Rembo, Makati City. The CHRD course is part of PMAP's Diploma in Human Resource Management (DHRM) program. Completion of five PMAP certificate courses merits a post-graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management. The other certificate courses are Certificate in Human Resource Planning and Acquisition (formerly Recruitment-Selection Placement), Certificate in Organization Development, Certificate in Labor Relations, and Certificate in Compensation Management (formerly Compensation Administration).

For other information, PMAP may be contacted thru telephone numbers 726-1532/81/88.

A MULTINATIONAL COMPANY ENGAGED IN EXPORT AND IMPORT SERVICES IS IN NEED OF A

CUSTOMS BROKER

REQUIREMENTS:

- ✔ A duly registered Customs Broker (sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation)
- ✔ Preferably accredited at all major Ports (e.g., Port of Manila, NAIA, MICP)
- ✔ Willing to provide customs and tariff advisory services
- ✔ Expert in customs clearance of all types of commodities
- ✔ Knowledgeable in securing import and/or commodity clearances and licenses from government agencies
- ✔ Preferably, with trucking service that can handle delivery within and outside Metro Manila
- ✔ With enough manpower to handle huge volume of importation, both by air and sea
- ✔ Willing to keep import records for 3 years from date of importation
- ✔ With good reputation at the Bureau of Customs and other government agencies

Should the customs broker be a corporation, it must comply with RA 9280 once the same is fully implemented by customs.

If interested, please mail your firm profile and contact details to:
AOU-DLUGMS, 14th Floor, Ramon Magsaysay Center, 1680 Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila

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JOIN US!!!
at the JOBZ Employment Expo 2005
on April 28 to 30 at Megatrade Hall 1, SM Megamall

JOB Market

Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Axis
Global Technologies, Inc.
www.axisglobal.com

Innovations for a Limitless Tomorrow!

Axis Global Technologies, Inc. is a leading IT distributor that provides value-added distribution of high-volume IT products in the areas of basic PC components such as microprocessors, magnetic and optical data storage, system boards, video cards and consumer electronics products. We are currently looking for talented, hardworking, self-motivated and result oriented individuals to join our team.

PRODUCT SPECIALISTS
- Must be a graduate of any 4-year course
- Male or Female, not more than 27 years old
- Must have interest and knowledge on consumer electronic products such as inks, media, notebooks
- Good communication and presentation skills, customer oriented and with strong leadership skills

SALES PROCESSING OFFICERS
- Must be a graduate of any 4-year course
- Male or Female, not more than 25 years old
- Must have experience in data encoding
- Excellent communication and coordinating skills, detail oriented, well organized and systematic

JR. PRODUCT SPECIALIST
- Must be a graduate of Marketing, Communications, Business Management or any related course
- Male or Female, not more than 26 years old
- With previous experience in selling IT and telecommunication products
- Must be willing to do field work

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ASSISTANT
- Must be a graduate of any Business and IT related course.
- Must be female, not more than 25 years old.
- Preferably with 1 year experience in foreign supplier coordination.
- Detail oriented, assertive and with good oral and written communication skills.

ACCOUNTING OFFICER – PAYABLES
- Graduate of Finance/Accountancy/Banking or related course.
- Female, not more than 28 years old.
- With at least 2 years experience in Accounting, particularly in General Ledger and Accounts Payable

LOGISTICS COORDINATOR/PLANNER
- Graduate of Computer Science or Technical courses such as Engineering, CoE and other related courses
- Male (for Coordinator), Male or Female (for Planner), not more than 28 years old
- High analytical, problem analysis, coordination and project mgnt. skills
- Previous experience in the same or related field is an advantage.

TECHNICAL MARKETING ENGINEER
- Graduate of COE, ECE or any IT related course
- Male, not more than 28 years old
- Shall be responsible in conducting client presentations and product demos
- Shall also conduct sales and technical training for products being handled by the sales team.
- Willing to work on field and with excellent written and verbal communication skills

TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINEER
- Graduate of BS CoE or ECE
- Male, not more than 28 years old
- Experienced in PC troubleshooting, or with a call center providing support for PC or notebooks

If you feel you meet the qualifications above, please send your resume, transcript of records, & 2X2 ID picture to hrdev@axisglobal.com or submit to our HR Department from Mondays through Saturdays, 9 am to 4 pm.

AXIS GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES, INC
Human Resource Department
20 North Road cor. 3rd Ave., Cubao Quezon City

DUNKIN' DONUTS
Pasalubong ng Bayan™

" JOB OPENINGS "

GENERAL SERVICES MANAGER
- ☐ Candidate must be a graduate of any Business Management course
- ☐ Not more than 35 years old
- ☐ With at least five (5) years managerial experience in handling Procurement, Materials Planning Control and Scheduling, Logistics and Warehousing
- ☐ Dynamic personality, detailed-oriented, systematic and highly dependable
- ☐ Excellent oral and written communication skills

WAREHOUSE MANAGER
- ☐ Male; not more than 35 years old
- ☐ SSI
- ☐ Graduate of any 4 year Business Management Course
- ☐ With at least three (3) years experience in warehousing system and inventory control
- ☐ Analytical, with strong leadership ability, aggressive and result-oriented
- ☐ Proficient with both oral and written communication skills
- ☐ Computer literate

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTIONS MANAGER
- ☐ Male/Female; not more than 35 years old
- ☐ Graduate of any 4 year Business Management Course
- ☐ Must be adept in all facets of system improvement of production and distributions covering product projections, delivery schedules, supply procurements and stockings and sanitation
- ☐ Must exhibit good interpersonal & people management skills; highly organized and can work under pressure

PRODUCTION MANAGER
- ☐ Male; not more than 35 years old
- ☐ Graduate of any 4 year Business Management Course
- ☐ With at least three (3) years relevant experience in Commissary/Factory (Food Business)
- ☐ Teamplayer and accustomed to work under pressure
- ☐ Excellent oral and written communication skills
- ☐ Computer literate

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS MANAGER
- ☐ Candidate must be a graduate of Advertising, Marketing or has proven track record in events management
- ☐ Not more than 33 years old
- ☐ With at least three (3) years in events management, managing sales and promotional activities preferably in quick service restaurant/food industry
- ☐ Must be creative, analytical, resourceful and able to come up with events working within the conservative budget
- ☐ Excellent communication and presentation skills

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
- ☐ Female; not more than 28 years of age
- ☐ Graduate of any four (4) year business course (Preferably Management/Marketing/Secretarial or Office Administration)
- ☐ With at least 2 years experience in executive secretarial works
- ☐ Excellent in both oral and written communication skills
- ☐ Sales oriented, customer focused
- ☐ With comprehensive computer background

Interested applicants are requested to apply in person or send comprehensive resume with transcript of records, most recent ID picture, certificate / clearance(s) from previous employer to:

Personnel Department/733 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City
(In front of Old Pepsi Plant)
E-mail address: hrd_job_ads@yahoo.com
Look for: Ms. Irma M. Victoria or Ms. Eya S. Palad

Printing Engineer Required

Should be specialist in Repairing, installing & dismantle the Heidelberg offset machine & finishing machine, Roland, Bobest & Kolbus Finishing machine

Please email your CV to
Email: beams1@emirates.net.ae
or
Email:ibadullahhabibi104@hotmail.com

VISIT US AT www.jobmarketonline.com

JOB Market ONLINE

MILLENNIUM COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION

A company premier in the country for distribution of IT peripherals is inviting young professionals to join the company in pursuing its goal of maintaining its leadership in the industry is in need of.....

Provincial Opening

REGIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVES (RSR)

Requirements:
- Male or Female, ages 22 years old and above
- Graduate of any degree course
- Must be extremely motivated & aggressive in pursuing success in his/her career
- Must have a strong entrepreneurial and excellent communication skills
- Proven record of experience in sales in the IT industry or any allied industries
- Preferably a resident of the following regions:
  - **Calabarzon Region- (Cavite ,Laguna, Batangas & Quezon)**
  - **Bicol Region–(Legazpi)**
  - **Western Visayas Region- (Bacolod, Iloilo, Roxas & Victorias)**
  - **Eastern Visayas Region-(Tacloban)**

Submit your comprehensive resume with latest photo to:

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
MILLENNIUM COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION
53 Tangali St. San Jose, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (0632) 363-7777 loc. 362
Or E-mail to: hrd@millennium.com.ph

Or you may drop by our website at www.millennium.com.ph
For more details about the open positions and fill up our online registration form.

Centrofin Management Inc.

Marine Trust — Greece
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A leading owner of Crude Aframax/Suezmax Tankers

CENTURY MARITIME AGENCIES, INC.
Required for AFRAMAX/SUEZMAX OIL TANKERS
MASTER/DECK OFFICERS
CHIEF ENGINEER/ENGINEER OFFICERS
PUMPMEN

Should have Minimum 1 Year/Rank Experience On Aframax/Suezmax Tanker

A very competitive Pay Package & Benefits matching the best in industry.

Promotion Prospect
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Contact:
Mr. Manuel V. David
Miss Johanna B. Durana
Rm. 505-507 VIP Bldg., 1140 Roxas Blvd.
Ermita, Manila
Tel. Nos. 524-3173 / 524-3175
525-1825 / 522-4226
Email: cenmar@avcorner.com
cenmar@eastern.com

JOBZ EMPLOYMENT EXPO 2005

COMPANY PROFILES

AXIS GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Axis Global Technologies, Inc. is a leading IT distributor that provides value-added distribution of high-volume IT products in the areas of basic PC components such as microprocessors, magnetic and optical data storage, system boards, video cards and consumer electronics products.

Its mission is to delight customers by offering efficient value added distribution of world class products.

It envisions to become the leading 3 C's (Computers, Communications and Consumer Electronic) distributor in the markets that we engage.

Its core strengths are: strong and comprehensive distribution infrastructure; extensive network of over 1000 dealers nationwide; strong financial capacity; dependable and reliable post sales support; focused and skilled sales teams; and dynamic and full service marketing programs

TOUCH ASIA CONTACT SOLUTIONS, INC.

Touch Asia Contact Solutions, Inc. is one of the most innovative and fastest growing call centers and business process outsourcing (BPO) companies in the Philippines today. The company is a total business solutions provider to the call center and BPO industry and it continues to enjoy immense growth and expansion. Since its inception in 2001, the company has grown almost 20 times in terms of revenue, 10 times with respect to staff and almost 40 times in seat number. Currently, the Makati and Cebu offices are being further developed and expanded and there are plans to open another site in the Makati area by the end of the year.

Touch Asia offers competitive salary and benefits packages, including other non-monetary benefits. In addition, Touch Asia dutifully rewards hardworking and productive employees with very exciting and fulfilling incentives schemes. To top this off, Touch Asia's employees have the competitive advantage because there is focus and emphasis on continuous improvement and growth through trainings and seminars.

For more information, log on to www.touchasia.com

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AMERICA'S FAVORITE BURGER CHAIN IS EXPANDING!!!

If you want better opportunities and faster career growth, be part of our growing network.

PRODUCT MANAGER

The Product Manager is responsible for achieving the following business objectives: sales, margins, market share and consumer satisfaction. The Product Manager shall liase with the marketing team of Burger King Corporation to develop marketing strategies and activities.

We offer a package of salary and benefits competitive to the industry. We also offer prospects of long term career where individuals can aim for the highest possible levels.

Qualified candidates may bring their Resumé with 2x2 photo and transcript of records to:
2/F Topy Bldg. #3 Economia St.
Bagumbayan (Libis) QC
(Topy Compound at the back of Honda Cars Libis)

or email resumé at
hrd_bk@philking.com.ph

WE WILL ONLY REPLY TO QUALIFIED CANDIDATES.

BURGER KING

AMERICA'S FAVORITE BURGER CHAIN IS EXPANDING!!!

If you want better opportunities, faster career growth and are hot to get world-class training, be part of our growing network.

ASSISTANT RESTAURANT MANAGERS

(For Cavite, Bulacan & Metro Manila Assignments)
- Male or Female, not more than 30 years old
- Graduate of any four-year business related course
- Minimum of 2 years experience in the fast food industry, managerial level
- Willing to work in different shifts and long hours if necessary

RESTAURANT GENERAL MANAGERS

(For Bulacan & Metro Manila Assignments)
- Male or Female, not more than 35 years old
- Graduate of any four-year business related course
- Minimum of 3 years experience in the fast food industry, managerial level, Unit/Store Manger preferred.
- Willing to work in different shifts and long hours if necessary

We offer a package of salary and benefits competitive to the industry. We also offer prospects of long term career where individuals can aim for the highest possible levels.

Qualified candidates may bring their Resumé with 2x2 photo and transcript of records
2/F Topy Bldg. #3 Economia St.
Bagumbayan (Libis) QC
(Topy Compound at the back of Honda Cars Libis)

or email resumé at hrd_bk@philking.com.ph

WE WILL ONLY REPLY TO QUALIFIED CANDIDATES.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

OBITUARIES

Marion "Butch" L. Co

of Aparri, Cagayan

Born April 14, 1961 and returned to his Creator on April 24, 2005.

His loving wife **Ma. Madeline "Maya"**, son **Jan Maverick**, twin daughters **Jian Meryl** and **Jian Marienne**, parents, sisters, and brother, in-laws, relatives and friends request the reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Mass of the Resurrection will be concelebrated on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at the Parish of St. Peter Gonzales of Thelmo. Interment will follow at the Aparri Chinese Cemetery.

EDGARDO V. ANSAY

November 3, 1948 – April 24, 2005

He will be truly missed and always be remembered. He's in our thoughts and prayers. With all our hearts **Carmina, Lynette** and **Hershey**.

You are here for a reason
You are part of a plan
You're a precious design
Called GOD's special man
The trauma you faced was not easy
And GOD wept that it hurt you so
But it was allowed to share your heart
So that into his likeness you would grow

Dear Papa, this is to say goodbye. You were always loved, always will and please trust you will never be forgotten ...

*"Remember no more the sins of my youth; remember me only in the light of your love..." **Psalm 25:7***

EDGAR ESTELLA ORDILLAS

of Candelaria and San Marcelino, Zambales

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 26, 2005 at the age of 57.

His loving wife **Adele Jacob**; children **Che-lin, Camille, Edgar "Hero" II**; siblings **Daniel, Ruth, Conrado Jr., Jonathan** and **Noel**; in-laws, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the UP Sikatuna BLISS I Chapel, Mapagkumbaba Ext., Diliman, Quezon City, until Thursday evening, April 28, 2005 after which he will be brought to his hometown:

Interment will be on Tuesday, May 3, 2005 at Candelaria, Zambales.

The Family of Our Beloved

ALFONSO VERZOSA LIBUNAO

"PONCET"

Palos Verdes Estate, LA California, U.S.A.

Alumnus of : De La Salle University, 1966, Manila, Philippines
Worked with : Philippine Banking Corp., Manila, Philippines
Pacific Bell Telecommunications, LA CA, Retired

Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 57 on March 19, 2005 at Torrance Memorial Medical Center, LA CA, would like to invite all his former Classmates & Officemates, Friends, Relatives and those who knew and loved him.

"To a 40th Day Mass Celebration" today, April 28, 2005 at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati at 12:15 Noon.

Missed by his loving wife **Angelica**; children **Laurence, Cheryl & Kyle Reuter, Joyce**; Stepchildren: **Geraldine & James, Rich**; Mother-in-law: **Matilde Cruz vda. de Flores**; sisters and brothers-in-law: **Evelyn & Antonio Lustre, Joy & Ramon Arcega**; nieces and nephews.

"And the time has come for my departure, I have finished the good fight, I have finished the race, I kept the Faith."
2 Timothy 4:6-7

CIRINICO B. BARRETO

Retiree of United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 26, 2005 at the age of 62. His body lies in state at 32 16th Ave., Murphy, Cubao. Interment will be on April 30.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

COL. ALFREDO BRAVO DELA CRUZ, SR.

of TUAO, CAGAYAN and OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, USA

WWII (BATAAN) Veteran
U.P. Vanguard Class, 1950
PEFTOK 20th BCT

Died in the grace of our Lord on April 20, 2005.

His loving wife **Rose**; children **Alfredo, Jr., Rosalie** and **Diosdado**; siblings **Dominador** and **Ester**; nephews, nieces, in-laws, grandchildren and relatives request your kind prayers for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels-Guadalupe, Makati City from April 30, 2005.

Interment will be at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. Date and time will be announced later.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

CLARISA DIMALANTA Y GARCIA

Former Head Librarian at the U.P. College of Medicine

Joined our Lord on April 26, 2005 at the age of 86.

Her body lies in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Magallanes Makati.

Interment will be announced later.

We design OBITUARIES for free.

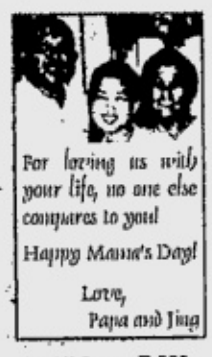
"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." — John 3:16

CLASSIFIEDS

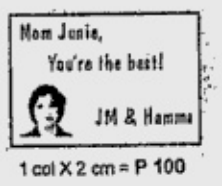
Philippine Daily Inquirer
MESSAGEBOARD

Mother's Day Treat

Warm your mom's heart with your deeply felt love note telling her how special she is to you. On May 8, Mother's Day, **INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS**, the widest reaching classifieds, will highlight a "Mother's Day special section" for personal ads dedicated to the first woman in all our lives.



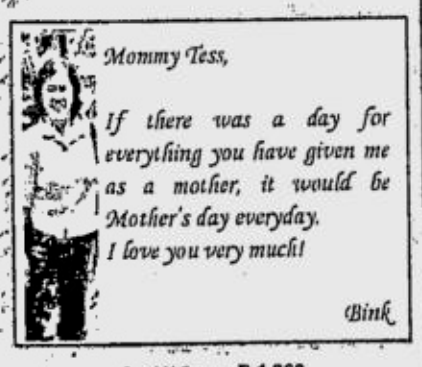
1 col X 5 cm = P 500



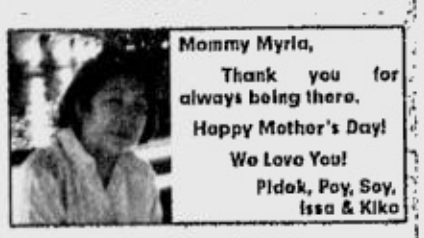
1 col X 2 cm = P 100

1col X 3 cm = P 200

2col X 6 cm = P 1,600



2 col X 5 cm = P 1,000



2col X 3 cm = P 500

Take advantage of this offer and this will surely be one of the **BEST** gifts your mom will ever receive and cherish. For more info, you may visit or call any Inquirer branch.

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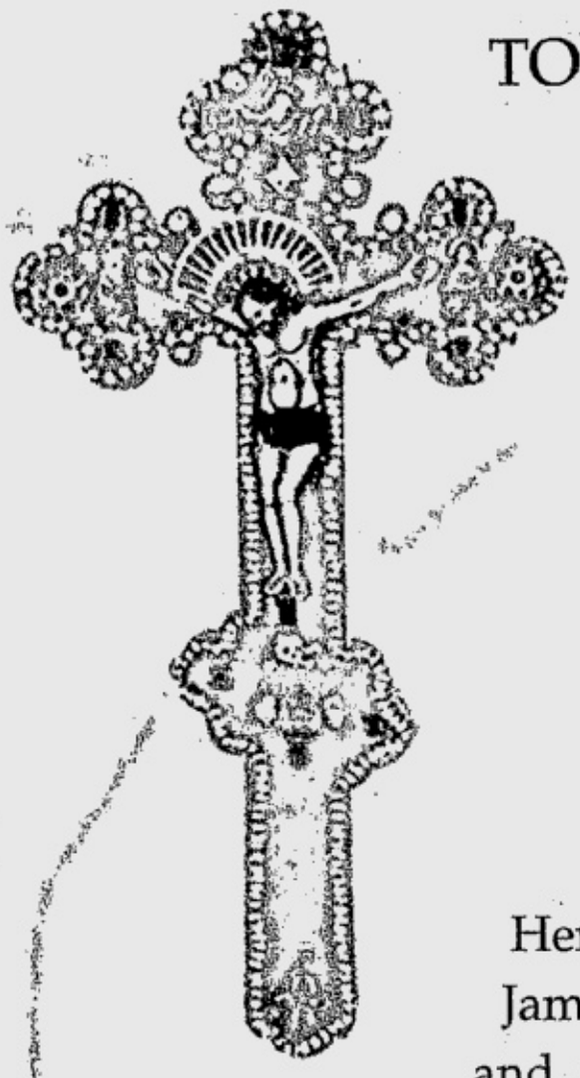

TOGETHER WITH THE FAMILY OF OUR BELOVED

BELLA DY TAN

THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF

UNIVERSAL RECORDS

announced her joining our Creator and our Lord
on April 26, 2005 at the age of 51.

Her surviving husband Jack Tan, daughter Jacklyn, son Jeffrey, father James G. Dy, mother Julieta Go Dy, mother-in-law Juanita Tan, brothers and sisters Jameson Dy, Howard and Arceli Dy, Jennifer and Eric Co, Kathleen and George Go, Sharon and Kerwin Law, brothers and sisters-in-law Jimmy and Terry Tan, Jeannette and Fortunato Chua, Juliet and Antonio Dy.

Her aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces and other relatives request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Christ The King Parish Church, Chapel C, Green Meadows Avenue, Brgy. Ugong Norte, Quezon City. There will be daily masses at 8 p.m. until Saturday evening.

Interment will be on morning of May 1st, Sunday. Details will be announced later.

Our Dearly Beloved

BELLA DY TAN

June 24, 1953 - April 26, 2005

Peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 51.

Her loving husband **JACK DYTOC TAN**; children **Jaclyn** and **Jeffrey**; parents **Dr. James G. Dy** and **Siot Keng Go Dy**; mother-in-law **Juanita Dytoc Tan**; brothers and sisters-in-law: **Jameson** & **Baby**, **Howard** & **Arceli**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Jennifer** & **Erickson**, **Kathleen** & **George**, **Sharon** & **Kerwin**; brother-in-law and sisters-in-law **Jimmy** & **Teresita**, **Jeanette** & **Fortunato**, and **Juliet** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the CHRIST THE KING Greenmeadows Chapel C, Greenmeadows Avenue, Quezon City. Holy Mass will be offered every night until Saturday, April 30, 2005 at 8:00 p.m.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 1, 2005 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Christ the King. Burial details will be announced later.

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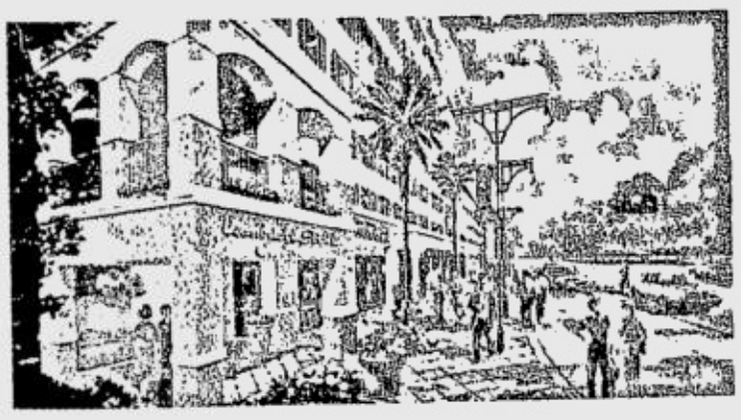
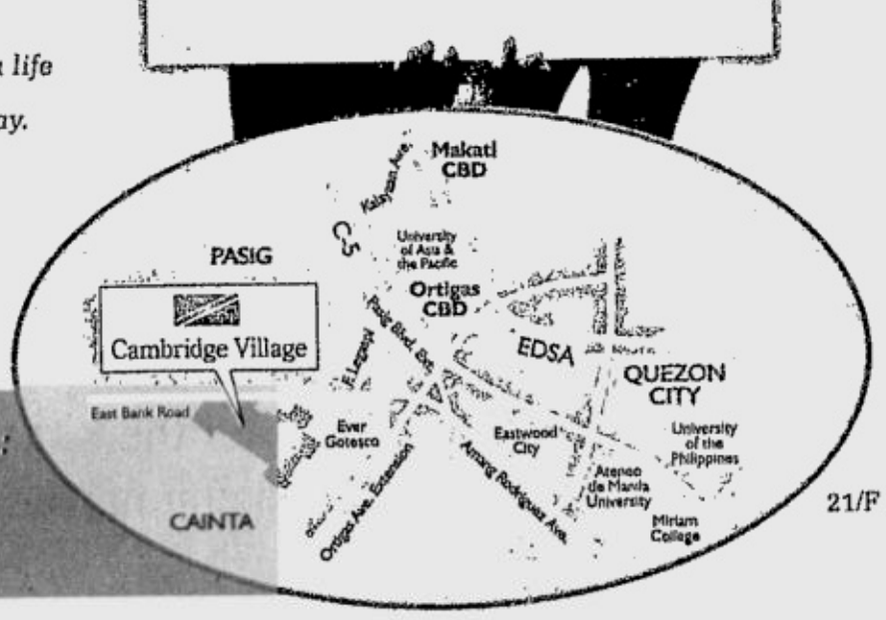


At Fordham Park in Cambridge Village, enjoy a life made so much richer in so many ways, everyday.



* *All units at Fordham Park will be delivered bare except for the toilet/bathroom fixtures. Buyers have the option to build partitioning for up to two bedrooms at their own expense.*

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FOR ANNOUNCEMENT PURPOSES ONLY

Summer coolers

BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant offers summer smoothies and coolers that both kids and adults will surely like.

Enjoy Burgoo's Orange Juice, Pineapple Juice, Dalandan Juice or Shake, Watermelon Shake, Ripe and Green Mango Shake, Strawberry Cooler, Kiwi Cooler, Banana Split, Cookies and Cream, Rocky Road, Marshmallow Foam, Piña Colada, Citrus Rum Cooler, Mudslide, among others.

Here are some refreshing recipes.

Dalandan juice/shake

2 ½ oz fresh *dalandan* extract
1 oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

Strawberry cooler

5 pcs fresh strawberry or
2 ½ oz strawberry puree
½ oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

Kiwi cooler

1 pc peeled kiwi
1 ½ oz simple syrup
1 scoop crushed ice

Just combine all ingredients in a blender and serve.

Home-made fruity blends

MAKE your own thirst-quenching fruit shakes at home with Tefal's Magiclean Ice Crusher. Pick from the fruits currently in season and blend.

Tefal has two types of blades that ensure a fine, even blend—one for light preparations, the other for ice-crushing and other heavy functions. A built-in toolbox serves as storage for the blade not in use.

The Magiclean Ice Crusher makes up to two liters of icy cool refreshment. A safety lock feature makes it safe even when there are kids around.

Create fruit combos and other flavorful concoctions like the following:

Banana-Choco Smoothie

1 pc ripe *lakatan* banana
1 tetrapak Chocolait drink
Ice cubes

Procedure:

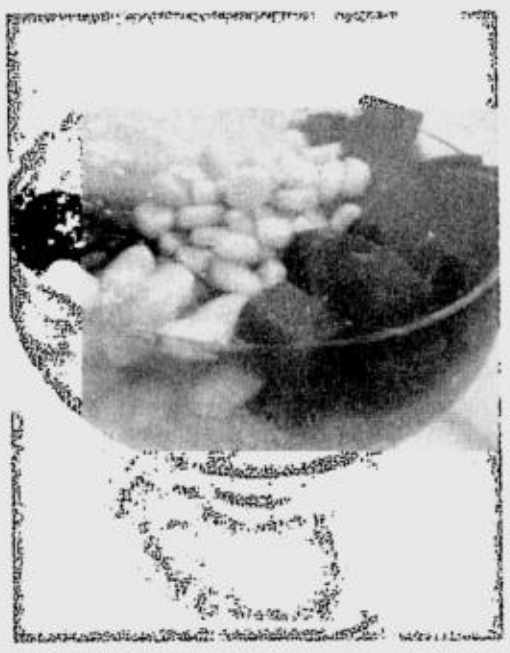
Combine all the ingredients in Tefal's Magiclean Ice Crusher. Mix at high speed. Pour in a tall glass and serve.

Green Mango Cooler

4 cubes green mango
½ tablespoon syrup
¼ c water
Ice cubes

Procedure:

Combine all the ingredients in Tefal's Magiclean Blender Ice Crusher. Mix at high speed. Pour in a tall glass and serve.



Halo-halo as you like it

INDULGE your craving for a luscious glass of halo-halo at Chinese Monk Casual Dining Restaurant, 1/L Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

Enjoy a generous helping of your favorite sweets such as *nata de coco*, *kaong*, *macapuno*, *garbanzos*, banana, red *mongo*, *pinipig*, *langka*, *leche flan* and *halaya ube*. The whole concoction is topped with a scoop of vanilla or *ube* ice cream.

Also try other cool and refreshing drinks: Black Gulaman, Lemon Iced Tea, Pink Lemonade and Fresh Buco Juice, among others.

Chinese Monk comfortably seats 220 persons. It specializes in Chinese dishes with no vetsin or monosodium glutamate. The restaurant is open daily from 11 a.m.-2 a.m., the following day. Call 8974129. Food delivery in nearby areas is accepted.

The Academy Announces !!!

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14 1/2	L. ARM	10
27	R. THIGH	22
27	L. THIGH	22

To date, she has lost 53 inches even though she has not yet completed her course. (Actual record can be seen at the Clinic.)

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Coffee, smoothies and 'me'

THE COFFEE Beanery has launched a new slogan, "Meet Me at The Beanery," in keeping with its image as a place to meet and hang out.

This summer, The Coffee Beanery offers two special cool blends: Green Tea Milkshake and Strawberry Smoothie. The health-conscious can try Sugarfree Green Tea and Yogurt Shake. They can be complemented with a Sugarfree Chilled Cheesecake, which consists of soft cream cheese filling on Graham crackers and sweetened with Splenda.

The Coffee Beanery bakeshop's summer special is the Nanaimo Bar, a chewy pecan and coconut crusted bar glazed with melted dark chocolate. It goes well with either Lemon Poppy Seed Cake or Pineapple Upside Down.

Sandwiches include the signature CB Triple Decker, Tuna Salad and Deli Meat Sandwich. Pastas include Arabiatta, Carbonara and Tuna Marinara.

The Coffee Beanery outlets are in Quezon Avenue, Don Antonio Commonwealth, Robinsons Place Pioneer, E. Rodriguez, Metrowalk Ortigas, Mandaue City, Shangri-La Plaza Mall and all Cravings Restaurants. Call 4266681.

Summer nibbles and refreshers

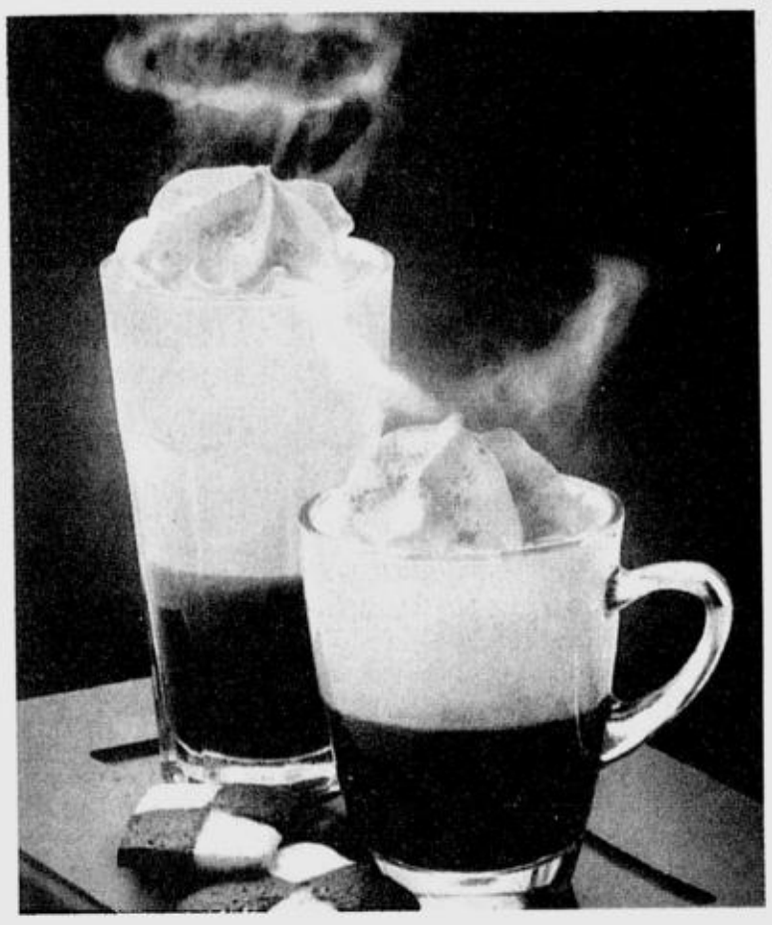
VISIT Segafredo Espresso and try its appetizers: Wing Puffs (lollipop chicken wings marinated in barbecue sauce), Crispy Onion Rings, Spicy Squid Bites and Rice Croquettes with cheese and bacon filling.

Each order comes with a choice of concasse dip with tomato and basil or wasabi mayo.

Refresh with Tropical Passion, a concoction of pineapple and orange juices and cherry syrup. You may want to have instead the Cantaloupe Shake, fully loaded with the fruit's true flavor, blended with ice and syrup.

Segafredo Espresso Bar is at Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center and Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Call 7574058, 8453610 and 8453546.

Deliciously black and white



ENJOY a drink that's "half sinful, half divine" with Seattle's Best Coffee's Black and White Mocha.

The new coffee concoction combines dark and white chocolates with the aromatic espresso coffee for a smooth, rich and creamy blend.

A dollop of whipped cream is added on top of the blend, which is then sprinkled with cocoa powder and served with a matching black and white cookie.

Pandesal the way it used to be

PAN de Manila (PDM) pays homage to the Filipinos favorite bread, the *pandesal*, by bringing back the traditional way of baking it—inside old-style brick ovens.

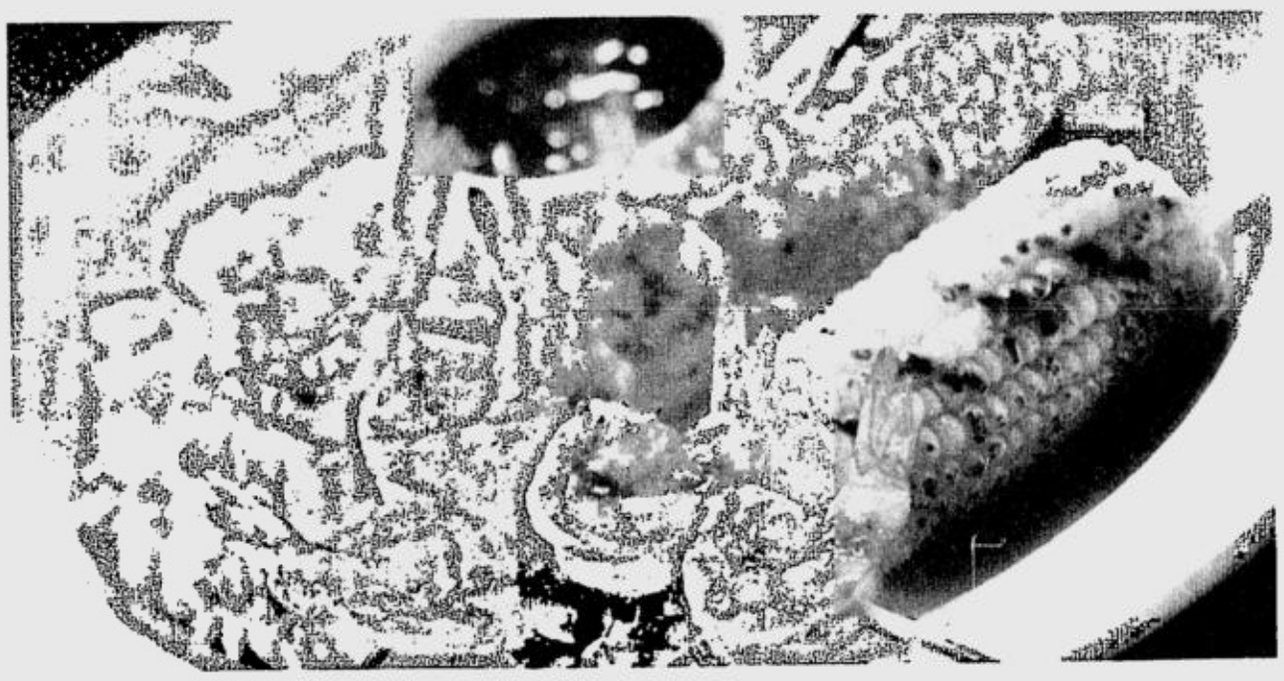
The bakery has been producing the *pandesal* (Spanish for "bread of salt") since 1999. The bread itself is believed to be of Spanish origin.

During the Spanish regime, pandesal was baked in a *cocina's pugon* (oven). From being sold in *panaderias*, it was then peddled by bicycle-riding vendors.

Baked fresh throughout the day, Pan de Manila's *pugon pandesal* has a distinct smoked flavor and light brown crust. It is soft inside. The bread, packaged in brown food-grade paper bags, contains no preservatives, artificial color or flavors. Bromate-free flour is also used.

Pan de Manila produces other breads like wheat *pandesal*, *ensaymada* (classic, *monggo* and cheese variants), *pan de coco*, cheese sticks and many more. To complement its breads, PDM has specially made spreads such as Garlic Butter, Herb Cream Cheese, All-natural Peanut Butter and Cocojam, fruit jams, marmalade and Spanish sardines.

The bakery is open 24 hours a day.



Doubling the pleasure

T.G.I.FRIDAY'S presents Double Glazed Grill from lunch to dinnertime as it marks its 40th birthday.

Choose from four main courses—chicken, ribs, steak and shrimp—plus one dessert.

The Double Glazed Roasted Half Chicken is roasted chicken char-grilled with Friday's own Double Glaze sauce. The Double Glazed Shrimp Skewers offers grilled skewered shrimp basted with Friday's Double Glaze sauce.

The Double Glazed New York Strip is New York strip steak grilled and basted with Friday's Double Glaze sauce. The Double Glazed Ribs is a rack of tender marinated baby back pork ribs char-grilled and finished with Friday's Double Glaze sauce.

Chicken, shrimp and strip steak come with cheddar cheese, mashed potatoes and roasted corn. Pork Rib is served with Friday's onion rings.

Cap your Double Glaze choice with Doubly Delightful Crepes. Two sweet crepes stuffed with a rich cream cheese filling, seasonal berries and drizzled with a hot caramel sauce.

T.G.I.Friday's five branches are at Glorietta-3, Robinson's Manila, Hotel Rembrandt-Quezon City, Sta. Lucia East and Alabang Town Center.

Coffee AID to help upland farmers

CORDILLERA Coffee, a café that serves native upland coffee beans, launched recently Coffee AID (Assistance for Indigenous Development), in an acoustic night that featured classic and contemporary music.

The project was conceptualized to preserve the traditional coffee-farming livelihood of the Cordillera Region, as well as to help local coffee growers by increasing production opportunities.

Owned by Frank Young and his wife Mary Grace Arboleda, Cordillera Coffee has already helped increase the value of coffee, particularly Arabica, in the region.

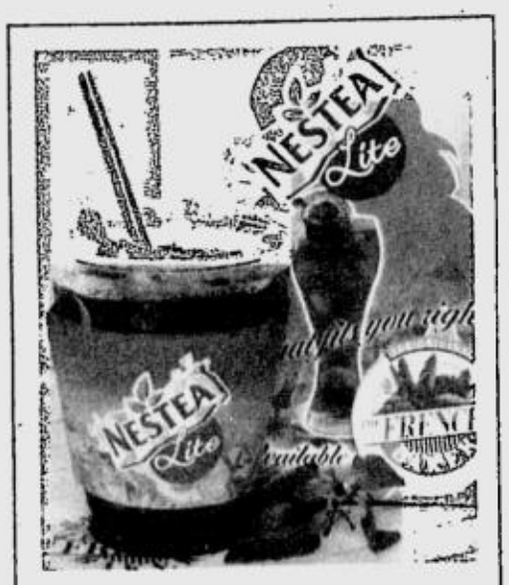
In launching Coffee AID, Young said the project aimed to ensure native coffee farmers of the Cordillera a regular income.

Coffee AID encourages individuals and corporations in the country to pledge an amount every month or to lease coffee farms, with the investor assisting coffee farmers develop and maintain their farm, in exchange for their harvests.

The investor could sell the coffee beans to Cordillera Coffee or somewhere else.

Young said the coffee shop, by promoting and serving the homegrown coffee beans, had increased appreciation for Philippine Arabica, organically produced in the mountains. This helped boost the coffee trade and the farmers' livelihood in the region.

Cordillera Coffee is at Unit 104 Llanar Bldg, Xavierville Ave., Quezon City. Those interested to participate in Coffee AID may call Grace Arboleda-Young at 4368244 or e-mail cordillera coffee@winningteam.com.



FRENCH BAKER'S NEW DRINK

French Baker has added Nestea Lite to its array of beverage varieties that include fresh fruit shakes and juices. Health and diet watchers can enjoy the store's line-up of low-carb breads without the worries of added pounds. Nestea Lite offers maximum refreshment with 33 percent less calories and comes with Vitamin C.

'Frenchified' Rellenong Manok

CHEF Dino Guingona created this easy feast fit for any occasion (and any budget) exclusively for Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce.

It combines French cooking techniques with Italian Mediterranean flavors.

Roulade of Stuffed Chicken is a variation of the favorite Filipino fiesta fare, Rellenong Manok. For a quick but zesty dip, make a Lea & Perrins-catsup dipping sauce. Just add a dash of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce to your favorite catsup.

Roulade of Stuffed Chicken

Ingredients for chicken:
1 pc large chicken leg quarter
¼ tsp paprika
½ tbsp bottled pesto sauce
1½ tbsp mozzarella cheese, grated
1 tsp parmesan cheese, grated
½ tsp garlic, finely minced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 ft-long string (for tying up stuffed chicken evenly)
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
2 strips finger-sized roasted bell peppers
For dipping sauce:
¼ c sweet soy sauce
¼ c soy sauce
2 tbsp Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
splash sesame oil
¼ t sp freshly squeezed lime juice
Whisk all ingredients until blended.

De-bone chicken leg quarter. Pound with a mallet (or any flat weight such as a small sauce pan). Make sure this is done on a smooth, durable surface.

Glaze inner meat with a bit of olive oil, minced garlic and pesto. Add mozzarella and parmesan cheeses, and roasted pepper strips.

Gently roll stuffing evenly using both hands. Truss with string to even out into a perfect roll. Brush skin with a little olive oil and sprinkle with salt, pepper and paprika. Preheat oven to 350°F for at least 10 minutes.

Roast for 18 minutes, remove string and cut up into bite-sized circles. Serve immediately with dipping sauce.

(Serves 3; preparation time: 20 min; cooking time: 20 mins.)

ROULADE of Stuffed Chicken

Mini pizzas for backyard cookouts

SAN Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center shares summer recipes you can cook in your backyard during weekend get-togethers with family and friends.

Try Monterey's Barbecue Platter, Grilled Magnolia Chicken Rosemary and Purefoods Grilled Pizzadilla. Refresh and relax with Magnolia Dairy Ice Cream's Buko Pandan Freeze and Double Mango Shake.

For more recipes, visit www.mygreatfood.com.

Grilled Pizzadilla

6 pcs 6-inch flour tortilla
¾ c pizza sauce
6 pcs Purefoods Sweet Ham, sliced into small squares
1 ¼ c grated Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese
3 pcs tomatoes, sliced
1/3 c sliced black olives
1/3 c fresh basil leaves, washed and dried
olive oil for drizzling

Preheat your electric or charcoal grill to medium heat.

Spread 2 tbsp of pizza sauce onto flour tortilla. Sprinkle sweet ham and top with 3 tbsp of grated cheese. Arrange tomato slices on top. Grill the flour tortilla pizza over coals for 1-2 minutes or until your crust is golden and crispy and the cheese is melted.

Top with black olives and fresh basil. Drizzle with olive oil before serving.

Makes six 6-inch pizzas.

Popcorn surprise

GIVE your favorite movie snack a summer twist. This popcorn recipe will be a delightful surprise for friends and family.

Summer Vacation Popcorn

8 popped ACT microwave popcorn, Butter flavor (approximately 2 bags)
1 c salted pecans
2 12-oz cans rootbeer
1 c sugar
½ c light corn syrup
½ c butter or margarine
¼ tsp salt

Combine popcorn and pecans in buttered bowl. Set aside.

In a large saucepan, combine root beer, sugar, syrup, butter and salt. Stir gently but well. Bring to a boil, stirring until sugar melts.

Pour slowly over popcorn and pecans; toss until popcorn is coated.

Spread onto two battered baking sheets and separate with a fork. Cool. Store in airtight containers. Makes 12 servings.

Act II Microwave Popcorn is exclusively distributed by Benby Enterprises.

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THE 18-YEAR-OLD Chivas Regal Gold Signature

TORQUHIL Argyll (center), international operations head of Chivas Regal, leads top executives of Premier Wines and Spirits and friends in a toast to the 18-year-old whiskey.

Touch of gold at the end of the day

THE CHIVAS Regal 18-year-old may be the perfect way to cap a day.

The whiskey Chivas Regal 18 Year Old Gold Signature is packaged to reflect its premium quality. Around the bottle's neck is a gold band carrying key symbols: the lion for the Chivas Brothers' pride in the blend; Colin Scott's initials to acknowledge his role in the creation of the blend; and the 18-year-old symbol, says J. P. Santamarina, president of Premiere Wine and Spirits.

The Chivas Regal 18-year-old Gold Signature (CR 18) is different from the 12-year-old blend that the brand is known for.

Aroma and taste set the CR 18 apart from CR 12. CR 12 is honeyed and fruity with a rich taste and creamy smoothness. It has the full, rich taste of honey and ripe apples, with vanilla, hazelnut and butterscotch notes.

CR 18, on the other hand, is finer with a dark chocolate palate and velvety smoothness. CR 18 has undergone an extra period of maturation in the cask. It has multi-layered aromas of dried fruits, spice and buttery toffee, and a dark chocolate palate with elegant floral notes and a wisp of sweet mellow smokiness.

Consistency in taste is another characteristic of CR 18, which retains its taste and can be kept for a long time after the bottle is opened.

Salvador "Bambit" Bonoan, country manager of Pernod Ricard Asia, says brothers James and John Chivas created a breakthrough in blending when they combined aged premium malt whiskies with smooth grain whiskies. This created the rich and smooth blend of Chivas Regal.

What makes a good brandy

BRANDY has gained popularity over the years.

But how do you distinguish a fine brandy? Fundador Gold Reserve is a specially aged Spanish brandy made from a unique blend of brandies from the private reserves of the House of Domecq.

Spain is one of the two best brandy producers in the world, the other being France (Cognac and Armagnac). Brandy-making started in Spain in the second half of the 19th century, primarily in the districts of Jerez dela Frontera. About 95 percent of brandy produced in Spain is Brandy de Jerez.

In 1874, the first Spanish brandy was introduced in the market, Fundador, Spanish for founder.

Aging defines a brandy's quality. Charred oak casks for aging after processing, give much of the drink's characteristic golden color.

Brandy tastes best when aged longer. A good brandy must be fragrant, fine-textured, deeply flavored with a smooth finish. Fundador Gold Reserve is aged longer for extra smoothness.

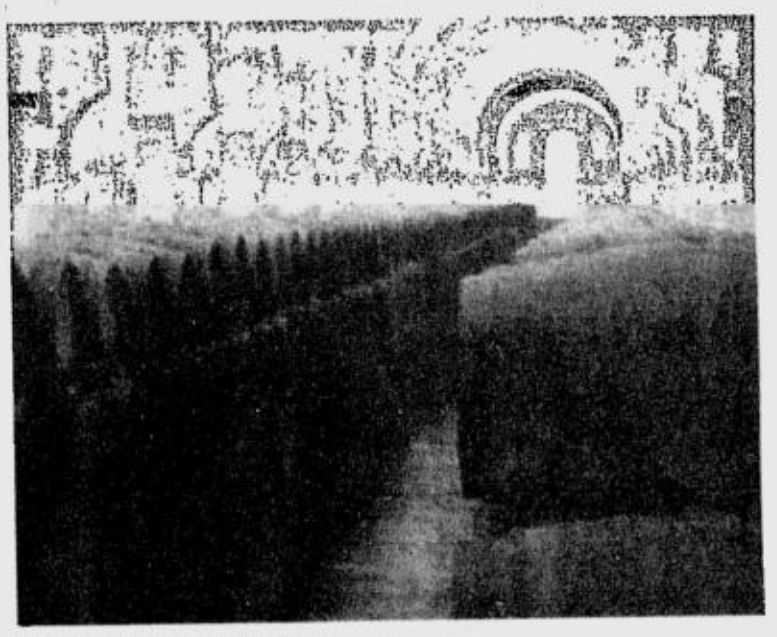
Brandies de Jerez can be classified into three types according to aging and the characteristic of the source wine spirit: Solera, Solera Reserva, and Solera Gran Reserva.

To be called "Brandy de Jerez," the drink has to come exclusively from the municipality of Jerez de la Frontera in the province of Cadiz.

By continuously blending older brandies with younger blends, Brandy de Jerez is able to produce a drink of exactly the same taste, color and bouquet over time.

Fundador Gold Reserve is a Solera Reserva and is 100-percent Brandy de Jerez. It is rich golden amber in color and has clean aroma, with hints of wood and sherry.

FUNDADOR Gold Reserve


BODEGA "La Mezquita"

THE DOMECQ vineyard at the Jerez district in Cadiz, Spain

DRINK OF THE MONTH AT PURPLE PEAR
THE RETURN OF CRIMES OF PASSION. Unleash your lusty dark side with "Crimes of Passion", Purple Pear Bar's drink of the month back by popular demand. Delectable iced mango puree mixed with vodka then splashed with blood-red grenadine syrup, topped with a maraschino cherry and served in a highball glass. Photo shows club owner Cynthia Lucero (left), socialite Vivienne Ledesma and bartender Gian Enriquez drinking the desirable concoction filled with guilty pleasures!

For previous chapters and clues, log on to www.inquestor.com
To answer the question in Chapter 11, text INQ Q<question #> <answer> (Ex. INQ Q1 E3 to 2320 for Globe/Touch Mobile and Sun Cellular subscribers or 309 for Smart/Addict/Talk 'N Text subscribers. Maximum of 3 text answers per question. Send in your answers by May 7 to qualify for the preliminary draw on May 8.
REGISTER NOW FOR FREE! Text INQ Reg <full name>*<complete address>*<age>*<gender> (Ex. INQ Reg Juan dela Cruz*1234 Ortigas Ave Pasig*34*M) Send to 2320 for Globe/Touch Mobile and Sun Cellular subscribers or 309 for Smart/Addict/Talk 'N Text subscribers.

Grateful to Filipino customers

JEROME Bories-Azeau, export director of Domaines Listel, was in the country recently to thank Filipino customers for the outstanding success in 2004 of wines from Domaines Listel.

Known worldwide for light and refreshing wines, Listel's offerings are produced by Europe's largest wine producer, Val d'Orbieu, whose grapes are grown on sandy soil of France's Languedoc coastal region.

Bories-Azeau, who has worked in the region for many years as export director of Listel, said "the Philippines is now one of the leading markets in Asia for Listel wines."

Domaines Listel has two major brands: Louis Chatel and Listel. Both are widely available in leading supermarkets and restaurants, including the Peninsula and Shangri-La hotels, as well as Shoemart supermarkets nationwide.

Bories-Azeau said the leading grape types were Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Chardonnays have aromas of soft red apple and pear on the nose, leading to fruity pineapple and melon on the palate. The Merlots, the Philippines' favorite grape, have plum and blueberry notes on the nose and delicate cinnamon in the background. The Cabernet Sauvignons are more concentrated, with beautiful aromas of black fruits, spice and cassis leading to a mouth-filling finish, which lingered on the palate.

Other wines to taste from the Val d'Orbieu range include the Chateau la Gordonne Rosé, a light-bodied rosé wine, pink in color, refreshing in style and fruity in its nature; Cuvee Mythique Blanc that comes from white wines from nine wine makers within the Val d'Orbieu group (the refreshing wine is based on Rousanne, Viognier, Marsanne and Grenache Blanc grapes, and has a delicate nose with notes of young fruit, a little oak and vanilla. Its palate has peach, apricot and almond notes with a light honey tone in the background); and La Cuvee Mythique Rouge based on the Mourverdre grape and blended with Syrah, Grenache, Carignan, Merlot and Cabernet

Sauvignon. It has a nose that is full of raspberries and blueberries, with cassis, juniper and herb notes. A touch of spice lies at the back. The palate is filled with summer fruits, some elegant spice and a balanced tannic finish.

Listel's fine and refreshing wines are distributed in the country by Future Trade International Inc. Call 6718694 and 6718434.

DOMAINES Listel wines

GO Flex is the world's first expandable storage solution that folds flat and has air and liquid tight seals.

Tips for safe picnics

TUPPERWARE Philippines offers some tips to help you ensure that your picnic foods remain safe and unspoiled.

Heat makes dangerous bacteria multiply very quickly, causing illnesses that can ruin what should be a fun activity.

Take the following precautionary measures in preparing food for picnics and other outdoor events during these hot, dry months.

• Thaw food in the refrigerator, not on the counter. Bacteria can grow on the outer layers of the food before the inside thaws. Always marinate food in the refrigerator.

• Cook at recommended temperatures to kill bacteria: poultry, 73°C; beef, 60°C, pork, 65°C. Don't eat raw or partially cooked eggs or shellfish. Cook foods as close to serving time as possible to limit bacterial growth.

• In storing raw or cooked foods for picnics, be sure container lids are tight to preserve nutrients and ensure freshness.

Tupperware's Go Flex! is the world's first expandable storage solution that folds flat and has air and liquid tight seals. It keeps food fresh, makes bags and baskets odor-free and prevents messy spills.

• Use shallow containers—no more than two inches deep are ideal. Never use deep, large containers for salads because the center will not get cold. The more food remains warm, the more it becomes a breeding ground for bacteria.

Keep raw meat in double resealable plastic bags, or put it in a plastic bag and then in a tight-lidded plastic container. Juices leaking into the cooler promote bacterial growth.

• To store food after picnics, use containers that fold flat when empty. Remember that you always bring home less food than you take out, especially during family picnics.

Go Flex! is perfect for picnics and on-the-go meals. It is just two-cm high and can be expanded to three different heights. Leftovers that will use less space will also get a "smaller" container.

Go Flex! is dishwasher safe and may be used again and again.

• To minimize bacterial growth, the refrigerator should run at 4.4°C, the freezer at -17.8°C. If you don't have a thermometer, keep your refrigerator as cold as possible without freezing your milk or lettuce. With Go Flex's freezer-friendly features that can withstand sub-zero temperatures, foods are frozen to the optimum level, keeping bacteria out.

Text 0917-813-TUPP (0917-8138877) or call 8454798. E-mail philmktg@tupperware.com, visit www.tupperwarephil.com or write to Tupperware Philippines, P.O. Box 1331, Makati Central Post Office 1253, Makati City.

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CCA
Center for Culinary Arts, Manila

Young Chefs
SUMMER CAMP 2005

DATES: 2ND RUN May 2-6, 2005 3RD RUN May 16-20, 2005

KIDDIE KITCHEN
For Ages 7-11
Time: 8am - 12nn

DAY 1 - Rise And Shine
DAY 2 - Under The Sea
DAY 3 - Finger Lickin' Food
DAY 4 - Little Italy
DAY 5 - Fast Food Favorites

WESTERN CUISINE
For Ages 11-14
Time: 1pm – 5pm

DAY 1 - Mexican Cuisine
DAY 2 - American Cuisine
DAY 3 - French Cuisine
DAY 4 - Spanish Cuisine
DAY 5 - Italian Cuisine

CLASSICAL COOKING & BAKING
For Ages 14-17
Time: 8am-5pm

DAY 1 - Soups & Classic Sauces
DAY 2 - Moist Heat Cooking
DAY 3 - Dry Heat Cooking
DAY 4 - Basic Breads
DAY 5 - Basic Cakes & Pastries

ASIAN CUISINE
For Ages 11-14
Time: 8am - 12nn

DAY 1 - Thai & Vietnamese Cuisine
DAY 2 - Filipino Cuisine
DAY 3 - Chinese Cuisine
DAY 4 - Korean Cuisine
DAY 5 - Japanese Cuisine

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

BASIC PROFESSIONAL CULINARY & BAKING COURSE

This program is designed especially for novice chefs & culinary hobbyists who wish to professionalize their cooking & baking skills.

Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday; 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

INTERMEDIATE PROFESSIONAL BAKING AND PASTRY ARTS COURSE

This program is designed for culinary hobbyists & novice chefs who wish to further hone their skills in baking & pastry arts. Some sessions require pre-requisite courses from the Basic Professional Culinary & Baking Course.

Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday; 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Entrepreneurship in the Food Industry (EFI) is a 5-month program designed for students who are interested in establishing their own food service enterprises.

Schedule: Mondays to Fridays; 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

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30TH ANNIVERSARY BASH
Golden Pizza, Inc. (GPI), which operates most of the early Shakey's Pizza Parlors in the country, celebrated recently its 30th anniversary. GPI is also behind Tia Maria's and Cowboy Grill. Enjoying the anniversary dinner and fanfare are GPI's board of directors and officers, Chiquio Prieto, Marixi Prieto, Tessie Prieto, Marylou Prieto, Alex Prieto, Lucy Spakowski, Leo Prieto Jr. and Pete Paraiso.

New I-ON Energy Drink from Revicon Brings Instant Body-conditioning

Whether you're a hotshot in the corporate world, a homemaker with a whole household to run or a student trying to beat a deadline for your thesis, you will know what's it like to have a gazillion things to do and not have enough energy to do these. Energy drinks have been recognized in the market to perk one up and provide extra strength when one needs it the most. Although eating well and getting an adequate amount of sleep are minimum requirements to achieve optimum body performance, energy drinks are known for their unique value of providing instant boost of energy to enable the drinker to perform any task.

The new and fast-acting I-ON energy drink that boasts of a refreshing and great taste is now available in the market. With natural substances of ginseng and royal jelly, this new energy drink shares the heritage of the long and trusted multivitamin brand of Revicon. It promises to improve your physical performance and mental alertness. For those lacking in healthy blood, Iron will be the answer, while, the extra energy is guaranteed by the multivitamin content.

Royal jelly is a good natural source of energy that contains amounts of proteins, lipids, glucides, vitamins, hormones, enzymes, mineral substances and other elements vital to the human body.

Considered as a stimulant, ginseng provides positive effects to the body by increasing its energy level. After taking it for a certain period of time, ginseng is also acknowledged for improving stamina and endurance.

Iron is an essential mineral and important component of proteins, two-thirds of which are found in the hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen to your body's tissues. The remaining part can be found in the myoglobin, a protein that helps supply oxygen to muscle, and in some enzymes. Iron is also involved in the oxygen transport and metabolism of the body.

And since our body does not create its own vitamins, an outside source is needed to prevent metabolic disorders, thus, it needs multivitamins. A multivitamin consists of various other vitamins such as, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and Vitamin B6 among others. These boosts one's immune system and help in specific functions for the body to work better.

When taken, the new I-ON energy drink from Revicon helps in improving physical and mental capabilities of the body leading to the increase of the overall well being of a person. The potency and great taste of the Revicon I-ON is the effect of the powerful combination of royal jelly, ginseng, iron and multivitamins.

With Revicon I-ON, one will surely experience an overwhelming instant burst of energy.

The New I-ON Energy Drink from Revicon Contains Royal Jelly

Modern and fast-pace living is a concept that would be totally alien to our great grandparents. Stores are open 24 hours, making it necessary for companies to have round-the-clock operations and women have invaded realms that used to be exclusive to men. These are just examples of how different life is nowadays from a few decades ago. Sometimes we hear of men and women complaining that they are spreading themselves too thin.

The list of things to do does not get shorter but you can take something that can enable you to get the job done. Though sleep and rest can best recharge our bodies, an energy drink has been recognized to give an instant burst of energy when one needs it the most. The most trusted name in multivitamins, Revicon, recently came up with a potent and great tasting energy drink, the Revicon I-ON.

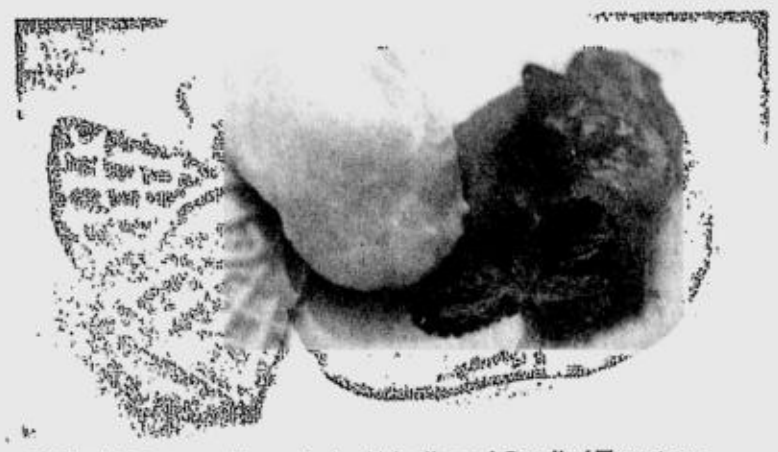
The new I-ON energy drink from Revicon has royal jelly as one of its main components. Royal jelly is a good natural source of energy. It proves effective when one is tired and overworked, during the states of asthenia and anxiety, or when in a condition of insomnia and anorexia, for example. There are even some who now attest to the fact that bee products can be used for the treatment or prevention of various ailments including common diseases like, stomach ulcers, arthritis and bronchial asthma.

Royal jelly equals the bee pollen in the richness of its protein substance. In the early stages of its development, the worker bees secrete and feed the royal jelly to the queen bees, in all stages of their development.

It is in their first two to three days, while fed by the royal jelly, that the young nurse bees reach their maximum development with their weight multiplying about 250 times. Queen bees, on the other hand, are fed with royal jelly for their entire life span, reaching maturity five days earlier than the worker bees. When fully grown, her weight is double than that of the worker bees.

Aside from responsibly taking care of the bees' growth and development, the royal jelly contains amounts of proteins, lipids, glucides, vitamins, hormones, enzymes, mineral substances and other elements vital to the human body. It also provides vitamins B1, B2, B6, C, E, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, inositol and folic acid. The royal jelly may possibly help everyone through diet observed and since it is not as popular as the bee pollen, more laboratory and clinical studies are needed for the importance of the royal jelly to be more widely known. Indeed, royal jelly has become a common recommendation for a large variety of bodily needs. So, to feel grand and stay in command, take in more Revicon I-ON for a good supply of the royal jelly.

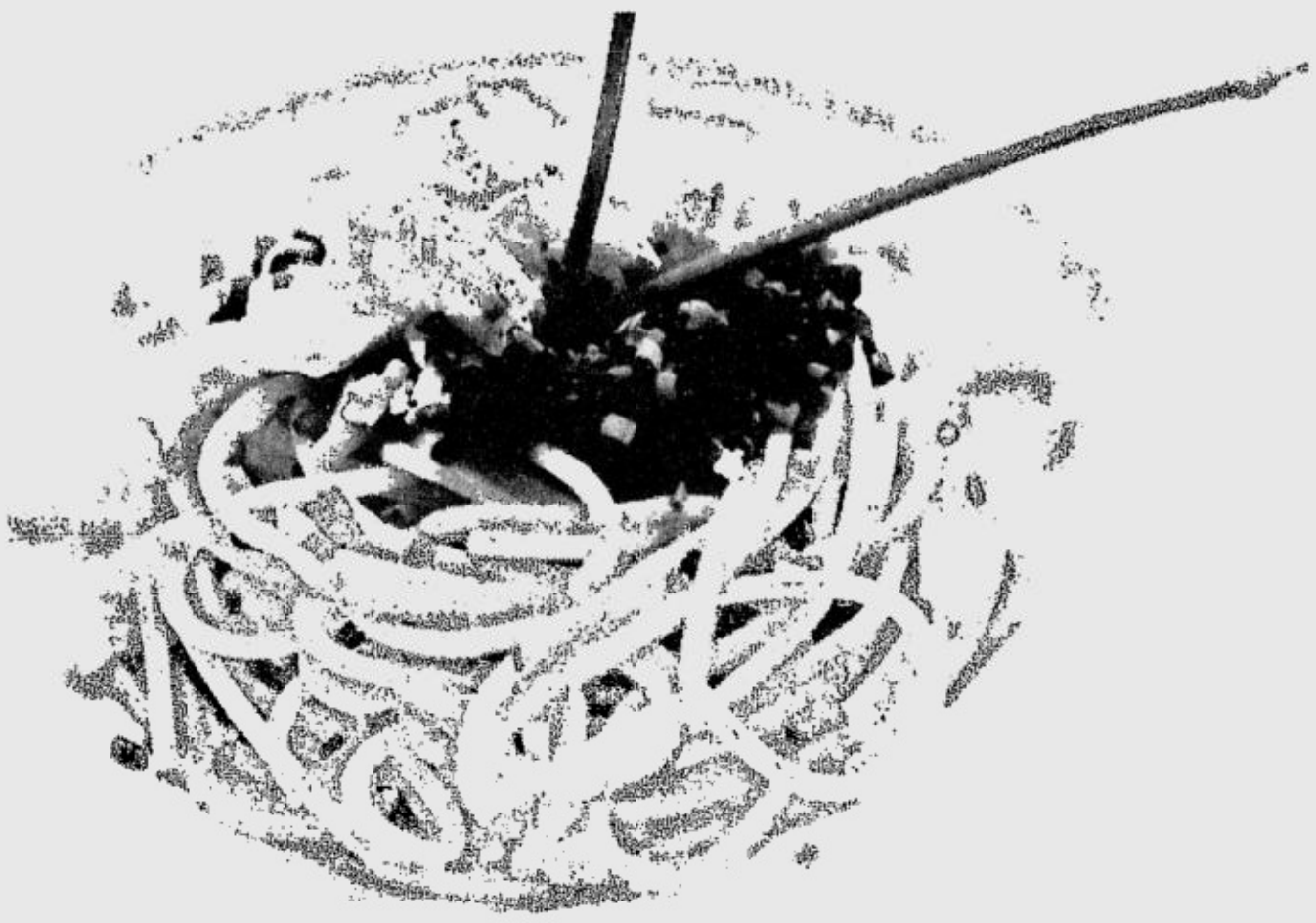
ADVT



CLOTTED Cream, Home-baked Pizelle and Candied Tomatoes

SEABASS al Sale

FRESH Taglierini with Foie Gras



The classics reinvented

INSALATA "Delizia" with Grapes, Mixed Greens, Pomelo and Murcia al Vino.

CHILLED Spaghetinni with Negros Cross Crab and Spanish Caviar

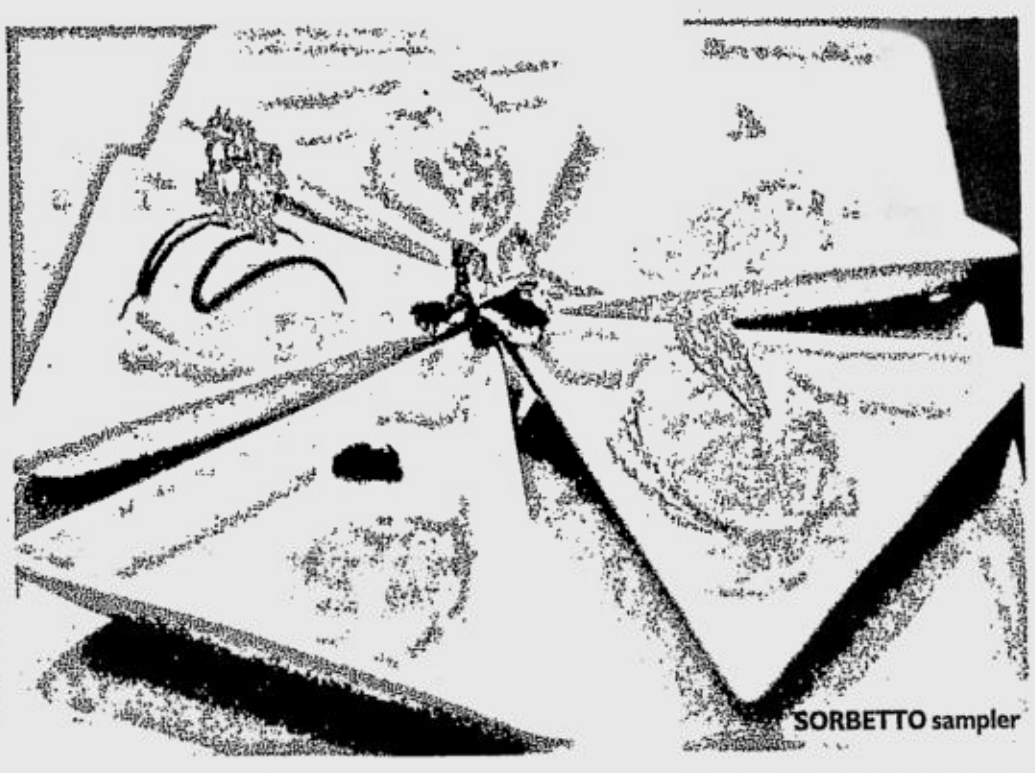
CHORIZO Iberico Panna Cotta with Capiz Scallops and Crisp Zucchine Fritters

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Joseph Agcaoili

AFTER two years in the restaurant scene, one of the country's best Italian eating places has introduced several items, including a cold pasta dish ideal for summer, that its owner describes as reinventions of classic dishes using the best local or imported ingredients.

The restaurant is Pepato at Greenbelt 2, and the woman behind it, of course, is diminutive but indefatigable chef-cum-restaurateur Margarita Fores. A fine-dining outlet like Pepato invariably caters to a niche market composed not necessarily of affluent clients, but adventurous and mostly well-traveled individuals.

"We always have to come up with something new every so often to keep our patrons interested," says Fores. "All our efforts, so far, seem to have been working. My staff and I find it heartening to get compliments, especially from vacationing Filipinos now based abroad. They can't believe that there's a place like Pepato in the Philippines."



SORBETTO sampler

Pepato tweaks popular menu items to keep customers interested

Endless research

The new dishes range from rich foie gras selections (Goose Liver Crème Bruleé and Grilled Scallops, Chorizo Panna Cotta, to name a few) for starters, to South Beach Diet-compatible alternatives (Seared Halibut Fillet and Sea Bass Al Sale are but two examples).

They didn't materialize from the restaurant's kitchen overnight. They resulted from nearly endless research and experimentations, as Fores, also a caterer, and her team tried to meet the demands of both Filipino and foreign clients.

As the preferred caterer of not a few stalwarts in the diplomatic community, Fores makes it a point to research the host country's dishes and ingredients—or at least ideal alternatives to them.

At the same time, by offering weight-watching Metro Manilans packed SBD meals (see related story), she has had plenty of experience catering to certain dietary requirements.

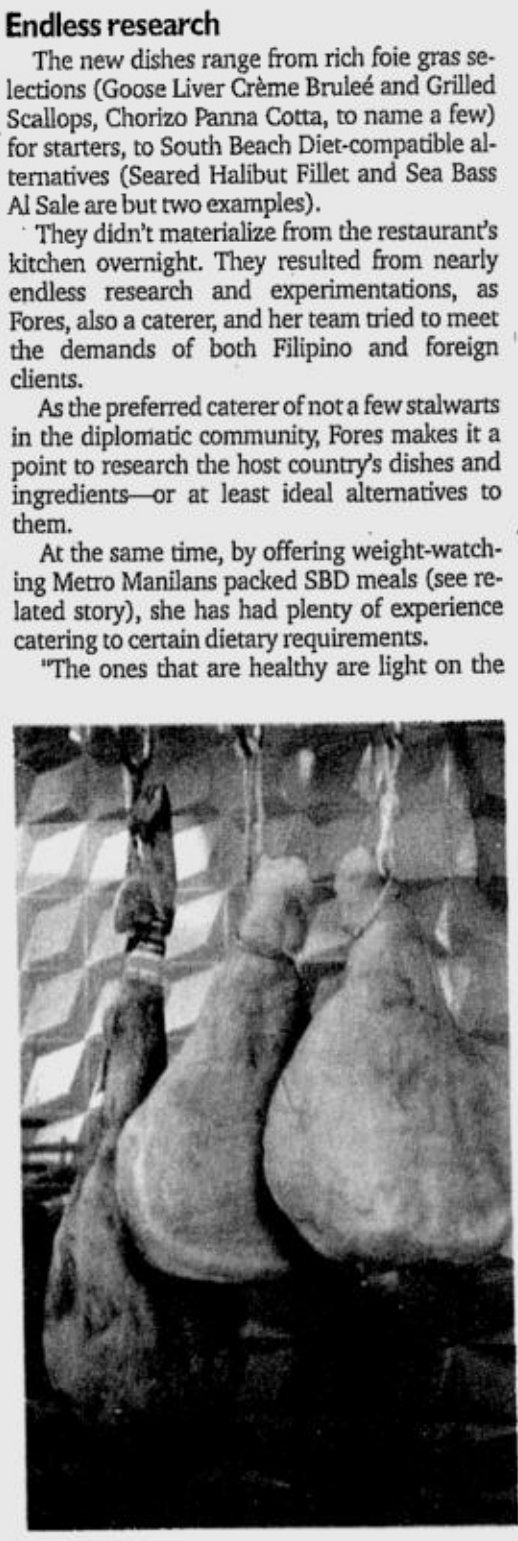
"The ones that are healthy are light on the palate," says Fores, "while the ones that are indulgent are a bit sinful. I've always believed that a restaurant has to add some sort of shock value [to its menu] to gain the market's attention."

FOIE Gras Crème Bruleé

Two years ago, it was Pepato's roasted bone marrow that became the talk of the town among gourmands. These days, says Fores, regulars, especially British expatriates, are delighted to know that she serves Clotted Cream with Home-baked Pizzelle and Candied Tomatoes.

Clotted cream, an ultra-rich dessert derived from the "fat part" of cow's milk, originated in the United Kingdom. It's usually served with sconces and jams. Aside from the main ingredient's local origin (from a *hacienda* in Batangas owned by the Sorianos), what makes the dessert unique is the fact that it's served with candied tomatoes.

Fores also takes pride in her locally sourced *maliputo* (freshwater jackfish), which she can cook three ways: grilled, deep-fried or wrapped in parchment. Most of the cod, cross crabs and scallops she serves are also sourced locally.



ITALIAN hams

Twists

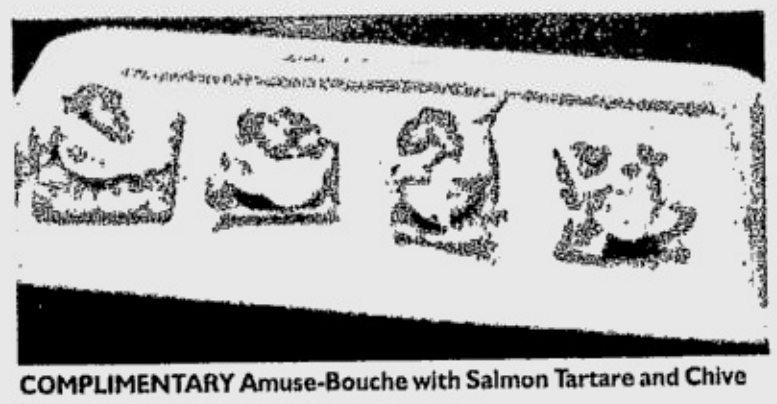
Most of these dishes may be Italian in inspiration, but Fores added certain twists that have made them all her own. Apart from being grouped under starters, for instance, her foie gras offerings are a bit sweet and, of course, creamy in the mouth. That certainly is one novel way of serving rich goose liver.

"The sweetness is just right to encourage your palate to continue," she assures.

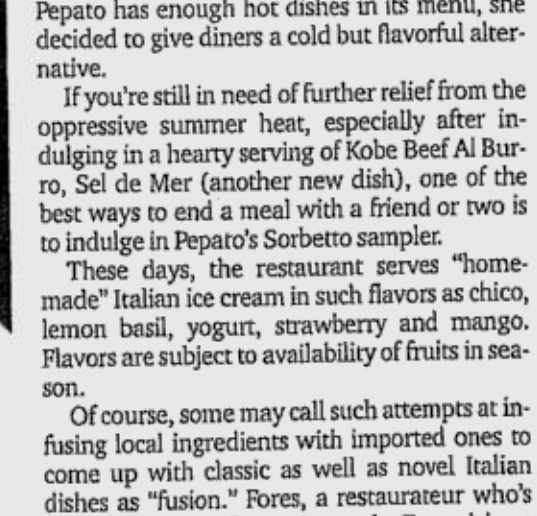
"Panna cotta," she adds, "is a classic dish. To find it in the starter section, however, is really a totally different way of doing it. Making it flavory is something new. The most that we've done with panna cotta before was to add lavender to it."

ROMAINE and Turnip Salad

SPAGHETTINI with Arugula and Tomato



COMPLIMENTARY Amuse-Bouche with Salmon Tartare and Chive Mousse



FOIE Gras Panna Cotta

Some dishes are also products of the season. The Chilled Spaghettini, which is flavored with cross crab, Spanish caviar and extra-virgin olive oil, is Fores' answer to the hot weather. Since Pepato has enough hot dishes in its menu, she decided to give diners a cold but flavorful alternative.

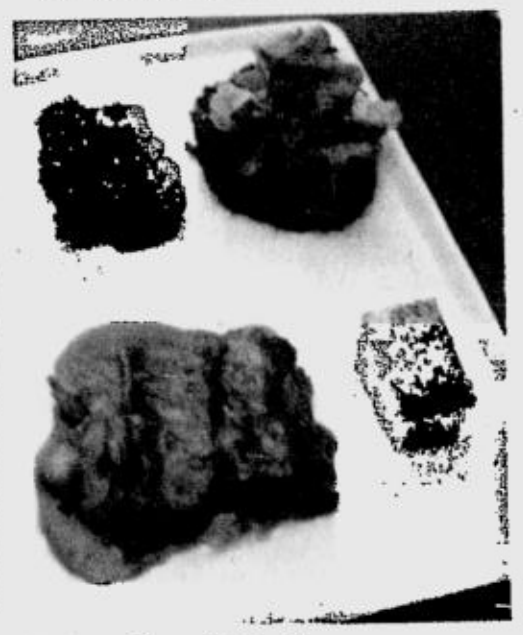
If you're still in need of further relief from the oppressive summer heat, especially after indulging in a hearty serving of Kobe Beef Al Burro, Sel de Mer (another new dish), one of the best ways to end a meal with a friend or two is to indulge in Pepato's Sorbetto sampler.

These days, the restaurant serves "homemade" Italian ice cream in such flavors as chico, lemon basil, yogurt, strawberry and mango. Flavors are subject to availability of fruits in season.

Of course, some may call such attempts at infusing local ingredients with imported ones to come up with classic as well as novel Italian dishes as "fusion." Fores, a restaurateur who's not exactly fond of resorting to the F-word, begs to disagree.

"I find fusion so overused that people don't really know what it means," she says. "We simply highlight some of the Filipino ingredients without compromising the Italianess of the dish. No matter what I do or use, I take great pains to keep the heart of my cuisine the same. The heart of it is still Italian."

E-mail avergara@inquirer.com.ph



US Angus Short Rib Duetto

ITO NA ANG BAGO!

Ginseng

Multivitamins

Royal Jelly

Iron

I-ON Energy Drink

ENERGIZED with GINSENG ROYAL JELLY & IRON

180mL

SPARKLING CITRON

KUNDISYONG I-ON!

Sa lasa pa lang, may sipa na!

At sa pangkundisyon, di kayang pantayan ang pinagsabay na lakas ng Ginseng, Royal Jelly, Iron at Multivitamins. Kaya bilis kundisyon!
Kaya ba yan labanan ng energy drink mo? I-ON. Tikman at maramdaman!

₱ 26.50 *Introductory price*

The New Energy Drink from Revicon

- Jon Hall, 26 years old
- Model / Sportsman
- I-ON Drinker

Hot and cool merienda treats

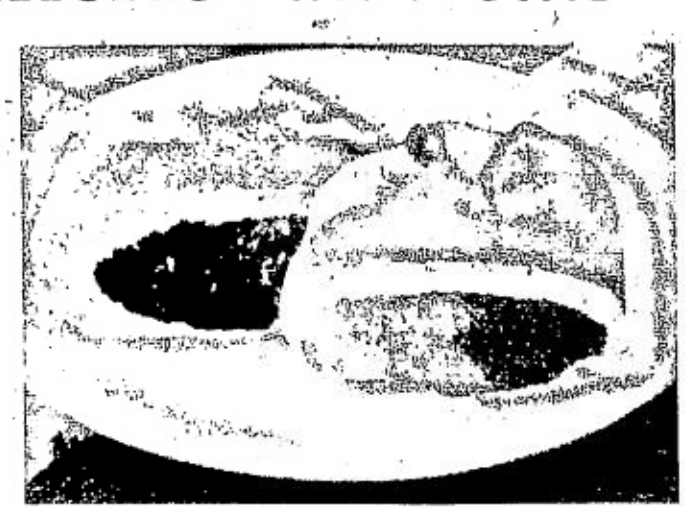
ENJOY street food like never before with Fritos, Ministop's own version of classic Filipino munchies.

MINISTOP has a new lineup of treats for *merienda* or a light meal.

The chain's new hotdog variants include Smokin' Hotdog, with a rich barbecue flavor, while Hungarian Sausage has a tasty mix of flavors and spices.

Ministop gives new twists to Filipino favorite street foods. The Fritos Kikiam Bar and Squid Bar are served either with simply sweet or sweet and spicy sauce. Other treats are Sweetie Paos, steamed white buns filled with either lotus or ube cream.

For cold treats, Ministop's vanilla Sundae Twin is available in ChocoStrawberry, StrawberryButterscotch, CaramelButterscotch, StrawberryCaramel, ChocoCaramel and ChocoButterscotch. Fruit Frost is a blend of fruits, vanilla sundae and crushed ice drizzled with special syrup. It is available in three variants—Mango, Banana and Halo-halo. Two upcoming flavors are Strawberry and Corn.



MINISTOP's Sweetie Paos, steamed white buns filled with delicious creams

MAKE dessert twice as cool and yummy with Ministop's Sundae Twin.

SYLVIA CANCIO COOKING SCHOOL
2240 Chino Roces Ave. Makati City 893-75-37/ 810-71-96

"I have never attended a basic baking course like this here in Manila. I have learned so much in a day. Every minute was packed with information and yet I had so much fun! My confidence level has shot up so much. My family will be really happy." - a Student

April 30, Saturday, 9:30 to 3:30 pm BASIC BAKING Would you like to learn how to bake but haven't got a clue on how to proceed? This completely hands-on class will help you produce light as air cakes and delicate baked goods: Chiffon Cake; Coffee Crunch Cake, Sponge Cake; Stawberry and White Chocolate Trifle, Rich Butter Cake, American Apple Pie, Chocolate Chip Cookies **P 2,300 (including lunch)**
Other dates: May 7 (Sat.), May 11 (Wed.) – reservations required
May 2, Monday, 2:30-5:30 pm HAM MAKING CLASS Learn how to cure, cook and roast your own ham. Hands-on. Bonus: Mapled Baked Beans **P 3,300 (inc. kit)**
May 3 and 4 (Tues and Wed.), 2 Day Japanese Workshop 9 am - 12: 30 pm
Japanese Stock and Sauce Preparation: Dashi, Tempura Sauce, Okonimayi, Teriyaki Sauce
Fried Preparation: Tempura (Shrimp and Vegetable), Katsudon, Tonkatsu, Ebi to bita no kawari-age (Japanese Cracker): Chicken Teriyaki, Salmon Teriyaki, Sukiyaki, Gyoza, Rice cooked with Mushrooms **P 3,500**
May 3, Tuesday, 2:30 – 5:30 pm MASTERING CHEESECAKES Classic New York Cheesecake, Maidu Heater's Bullseye Cheesecake, No Bake Lemon and Strawberry Cheesecake, Smoked Salmon and Chive Hors d'oeuvres Cheesecake **P 2,200**
May 4, Wed. 2:30 – 5:30 pm AUTHENTIC PEKING DUCK Learn how to prepare one of China's great culinary creations in your own kitchen from the purchase and preparation of the duck to the making of the pancake **P 2,500**

BEGINNERS AND TEENS (completely hands-on) P 1,800/class inc. of ingredients
May 5, Thursday 9 - 12 nn Macaroni & Cheese, Thin Crust Pizza: 4 Cheese, Pepperoni, Mushroom & Anchovies, Creamy Mushroom Soup, Mini ApplePie ala Mode
May 6, Friday 9 – 12 nn Siomai, Salpicao, Chili con Carne, Carbonara, Mango Jubilee
May 9, Monday 9 – 12 nn Mozarella Cheesesticks, Potato Leek Soup, Steak with Creamy Mashed Potatoes, Cesar's Salad, Marble Cake, Chocolate Fondue
May 10, Tuesday 9 – 12 nn Calamares, Garlic Mushrooms, Pork Liempo, Crispy Adobo Flakes with Garlic Rice, Croquetas de Jamon, Turon with Langka, Leche Flan
May 10, Tuesday 2:00 – 5 pm Buffalo Chicken Wings with Sour Cream Sauce, Baked Potato with Bacon, Garlic Cream Cheese, Lasagna, Crepes: Chocolate , Suzette, Nutella, Mango Panacotta

The longest pizza baguette

AS THE exclusive sponsor of the 2005 Philippine Fashion Week, Delifrance indulged the participants and guests with their pizza baguette—the longest pizza baguette in town. It has four flavors: BBQ Chicken, Four Cheese, Vegetarian and Hawaiian. CalCarrie's models were in for a treat as they trooped to the Delifrance booth after their long walk on the runway, cooling down with Delifrance's mouthwatering frappes: Strawberry Lush, Mango Loco, Rocky Road and Cookies n' Cream.

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

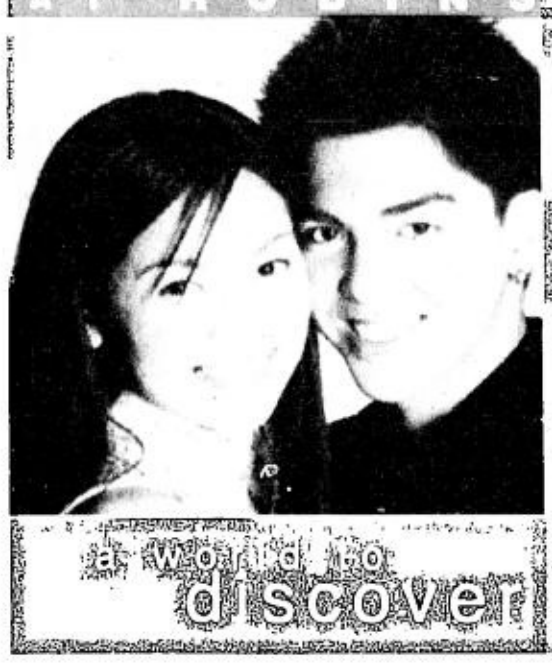
LIFESTYLE

SBD queen answers FAQs

Margarita Fores shares her secrets for winning the battle with the bulge

Text us your feedback: Inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS



RISE and shine! God is good and it's a beautiful day!

Though I can cook "thin," I never really took cooking thin as seriously as Margarita. So, if there's anyone to ask, she's it! As promised, the South Beach Diet (SBD) queen, chef Margarita Fores, answers your questions and shares her secrets for winning the battle with the bulge.

How do you make SBD work for you?

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

- Do not skip meals! Space out the five meals evenly, every 2½-3 hours. If you sleep late, save your dessert for later. This will help control your hunger pangs.
- Drink a lot of water. This helps speed up your metabolism and cleanses toxins from your system.
- Choose non-carbonated sugar-free beverages instead of sodas. Even if sodas have zero calories, the fizz bloats you and makes you retain fluids. Good choices are Crystal Light flavored powdered drinks in raspberry ice, lemonade, pineapple, orange or even peach iced tea at Rustan's Fresh, Price Mart; Wyler's lemonade at Cost U Less, Libis; and Lipton Carb Light beverages at Rustan's Fresh
- Add some form of medium to light exercise regimen. A short walk, taking the stairs instead of the escalator, lifting or playing with your kids is a good start. Avoid extremely intense exercise or endurance training like long hours of badminton or jogging. The lack of carbohydrates will weaken you.
- Always take a multivitamin to ensure that you're getting all the vitamins and minerals you need.
- Always do some form of resistance training if you are 35 and over to counteract the body's natural tendency to lose muscle mass. Light weight training, using fit-balls or bands; yoga and Pilates are good options.
- Choose restaurants that serve meals compatible with South Beach Diet.

How should a diet pantry/refrigerator look?

(I'm not too sure you'll be happy with her answers...Wow! No luncheon meat, no *liempo*!)

- Water-packed tuna
- Pam no cholesterol nonstick cooking spray
- Lean protein like low-salt turkey, roast turkey or chicken
- Eggs but do away with the yolks
- Lean low-fat cheeses
- Non-carbonated diet drinks
- Fresh herbs for more flavor
- Red rice and breads with grain

For those already in Phase 2 of their SBD diet:

- Raw vegetable crudites that contain a lot of water like celery, *singkamas*, cucumber, fennel, cabbage, radishes
- Low-fat/fat-free mayonnaise
- Mustard in fancy flavors to add zing to your dressings
- Good light olive oil
- Salad greens
- Boca Vegemeat burgers for vegetarians on a diet, great when grilled (Rustan's)

How do you keep the weight off?

- Make up your mind to keep it off, and make a real lifestyle change.
- Enjoy your treats in moderation.
- The third bite of cake should be your last. If you pass the limit, then you are not committed.
- Clear your pantry of all unhealthy calories.
- Spend most of your week eating healthy so you can treat yourself on weekends.
- Always stick to your exercise regimen.
- Choose grilled, boiled or steamed over fried, and always trim all visible fat till it becomes a habit.

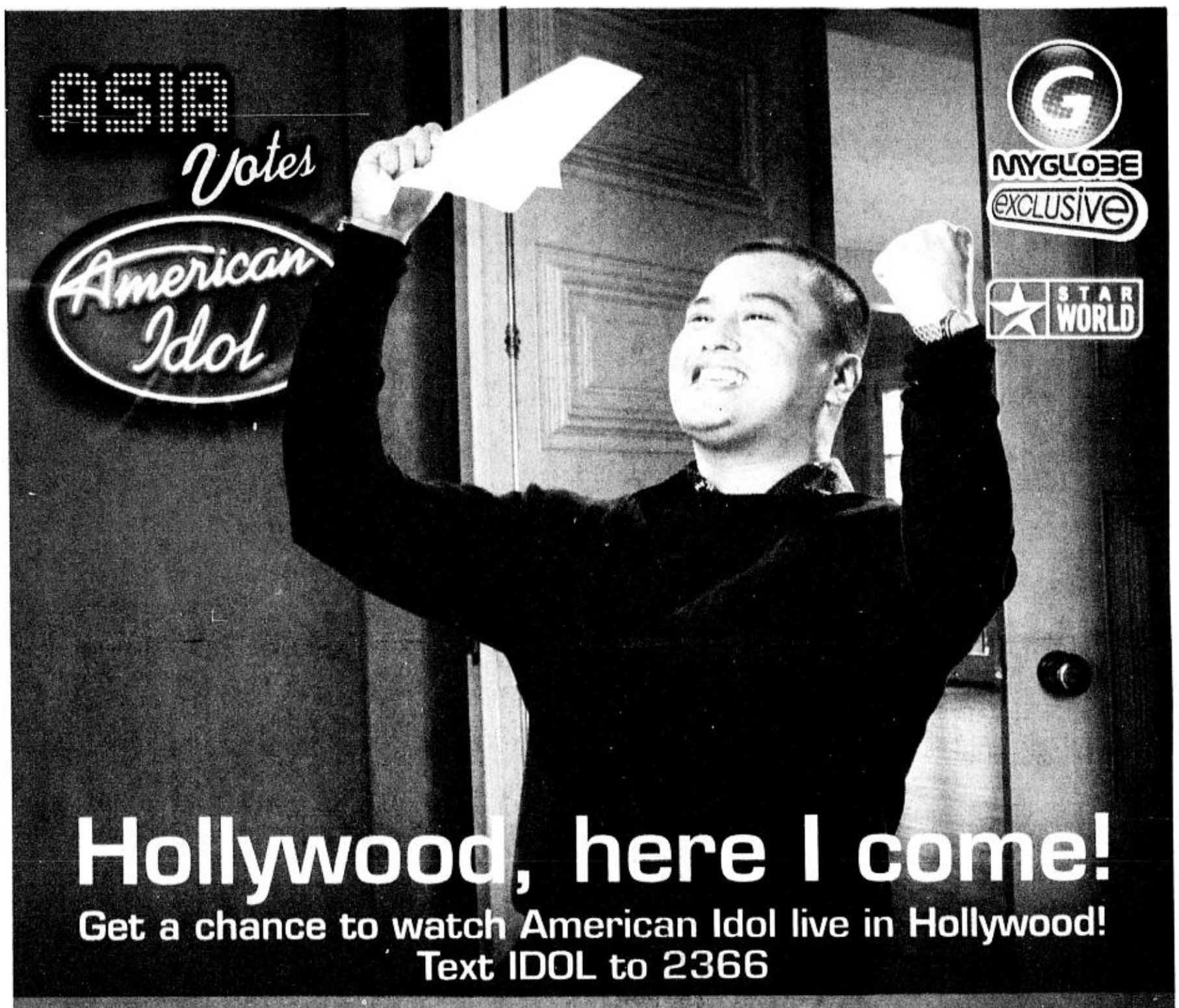
What's the weight loss like and what makes your diet different?

- The average weight loss of clients on our diet is anywhere from 8 to 12 lbs during the first phase—the first 14 days. I attribute the high success rate to the fact that we strictly follow Dr. Agatston's prescribed ingredients, preparation guidelines, quantities and proportions.

Anything new?

We are adding a lot of new main dishes with different sauces and glazes, and a lot of new salads, too. We are also developing new desserts that are perfect for Phase 2.

SBD/ D3



FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

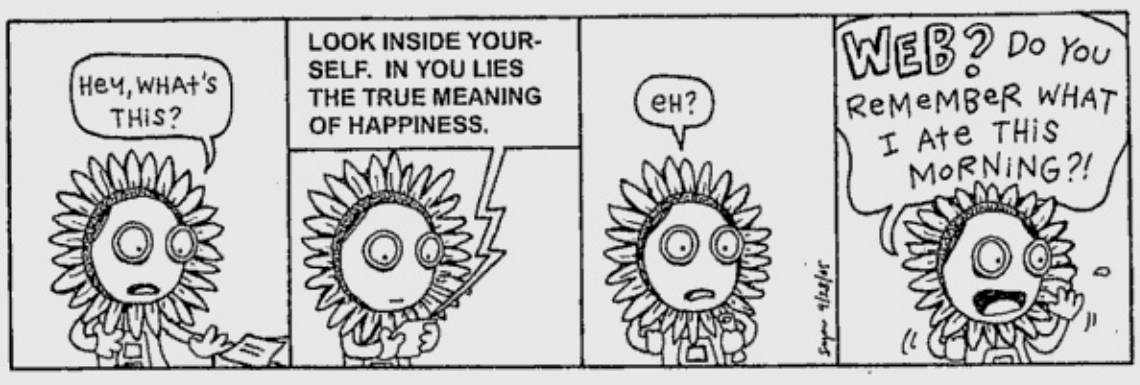
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

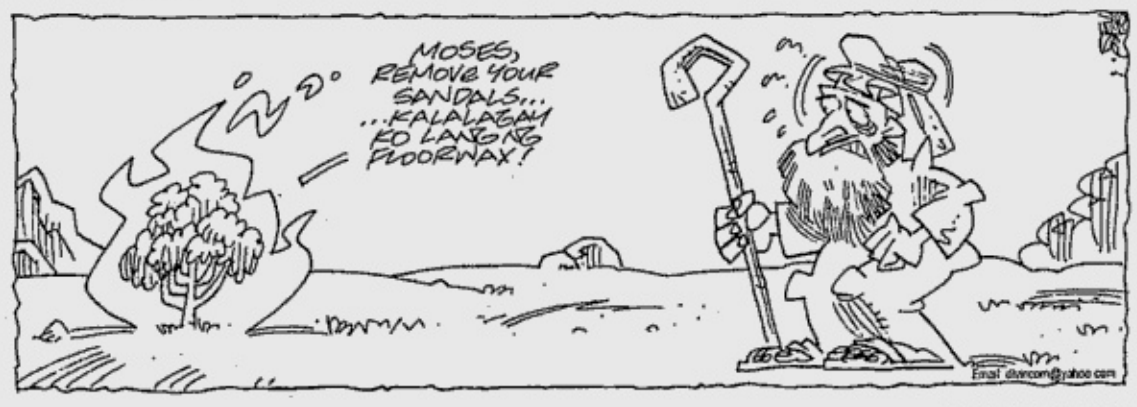
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO



DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're steadfast, loyal and faithful. Others know they can count on you. You're extremely determined. You take care with your dress and always look good. Y ou're a wonderful friend, lover and parent. You're also a skilled negotiator. You handle authority easily. The year ahead embraces exciting change that takes you in new directions!
Birthdate of: Jay Leno, TV host; Penelope Cruz, actress; Harper Lee, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might do something today that inadvertently calls attention to you. It could be something quite personal. (You are advised to be aware of this.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel restless. You want to learn something new, and you want more adventure in your life! Scratch this itch by going someplace you've never been to before.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a good day to pay attention to bills, debt, taxes and shared property. Tidy up loose ends in these areas. (Everyone has loose ends with these things!)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's Moon opposes your sign. This tends to make you attracted to someone. It certainly focuses your attention on close friends and other people. It's a good day for serious discussions.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a good day to get down to work. You'll find it easy to put pleasure aside in favor of duty and obligations. (This makes you feel all grown up.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is an excellent day to discuss the shared responsibilities for children. Similarly, you might want to have a discussion with a romantic interest about the division of labor and shared duties.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Serious talks with parents and family members are likely today. However, pessimism is rampant when the Moon is in Capricorn. Therefore, keep this in mind if others are discouraging.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Make a to-do list so that you feel better organized. Put everything on one list—personal, professional and social. Try to get the whole picture of whatever you're worried about.

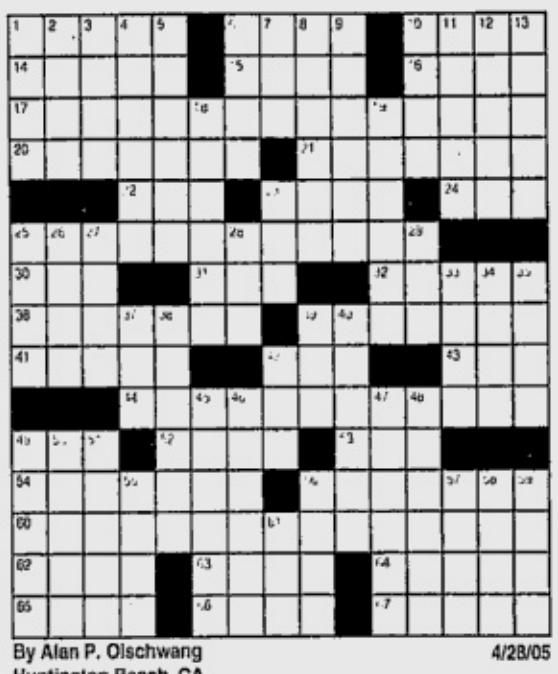
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're focused on money and financial issues today. You feel quite conservative. Suddenly, you're concerned about saving for a rainy day in the future! (This is good.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The Moon is in your sign today. This gives you a slight edge over all the other signs in terms of luck. It also makes you a bit more emotional than usual.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You need some peace and quiet today. Try to work by yourself if you can. Any kind of solitude will feel restful and replenishing.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Serious discussions with someone older could be helpful for you today. Why not learn from the experience of others? It saves time and money.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

4/28/05

ACROSS
1 Touches down
6 Small vipers
10 Flows back
14 Greek market
15 Simpson boy
16 Sign on for another hitch
17 Start of Bill Stern quote
20 Strapped footwear
21 Mixing utensil
22 Letters for ABC's daily program
23 Castle protector
24 Tuesday god
25 Part 2 of quote
30 Superman foe Luthor
31 Squiggly swimmer
32 Inundated
36 Fashionable as pie?
39 General pardon
41 Rolling Stones bassist Bill
42 The Greatest
43 With it
44 Part 3 of quote
49 Indian title
52 Stridex target
53 Tell it like it isn't
54 Flipped out
56 Speech impediment?
60 End of quote
62 Form droplets
63 Up a __ (cornered)
64 On high
65 Band together
66 "Auld Lang __"
67 Mocking birds?

DOWN
1 Thailand neighbor
2 Water in Andalusia
3 Norse goddesses of fate
4 Deepen, as a channel
5 Antipasto staple
6 Kindergarten recitation
7 Gained a lap
8 Big house
9 Visit
10 Formerly, once
11 Humdinger
12 Big and strong
13 Stalk of asparagus
18 Jubilant
19 Mr. Detroit
23 Acad. type
25 Defect
26 Depend (on)
27 Pop quiz
28 Told you so
29 Ram's lady
33 Arthur of tennis
34 Begin moving
35 Promotional excess
37 Damage a bit
38 Kind of play
39 PC key
40 Put in the wrong place
42 Tavern brew
45 Wagon train employees
46 Oil guard
47 Tepee cousin
48 Through this means
49 Biblical queendom
50 "Bolero" composer
51 Perfect
55 Williams or Gibb
56 Tickled-pink feeling
57 Informed about
58 Kilauea flow
59 Potato features
61 Novelist Deighton

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

P	L	E	A		S	W	A	M	I		S	A	N	G
Y	A	L	U		T	I	M	O	N		E	L	E	A
R	I	S	K	L	I	F	E	A	N	D	L	I	M	B
F	T	E		A	G	E	N	T		A	L	T	O	S
			A	R	M				T	R	E			
	N	A	L	K	A	T	I	G	H	T	R	O	P	E
P	R	O	M	S		A	N	N	E	S		L	O	X
E	A	R	S		G	L	E	A	N		P	E	R	E
A	C	T		B	O	O	R	S		I	N	I	T	S
S	K	A	T	E	O	N	T	H	I	N	I	C	F	
			O	L	D				N	U	N			
S	T	E	N	O		P	A	R	T	I		I	N	S
W	O	R	K	W	I	T	H	O	U	T	A	N	E	T
A	N	T	I		N	A	O	M	I		P	R	O	A
P	E	E	N		A	S	Y	E	T		T	E	N	T

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4/28/05

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

Landline needed despite popularity of cell phones

CUSTOMERS of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) whose phones have been out of order for several weeks now are finding out that cellular phones are not yet adequate substitutes for landlines.

For example, those who pay their bills by phone must now go to the utility offices and pay centers to settle their accounts. Also greatly inconvenienced are folks who cannot access the Internet and their e-mail accounts.

Businesses, too, are badly affected, and we don't just mean bookies, Internet cafés and lotto operators, but banks as well that cannot go online and offices that cannot send or receive fax messages or use the Internet.

Here's an explanation from PLDT to complaining subscribers around areas of Singalong, San Andres, Quirino, and South Super Highway:

"Some 1,500 (are) affected by a major cable trouble. An underground phone cable along Taft Avenue was hit by still unknown parties last weekend (actually two weekends ago), disrupting service. Emergency repair crews were immediately dispatched to restore service ASAP (as soon as possible) but their efforts are being hampered by the heavy vehicular daytime traffic along Taft.

They should be able to restore service within the week. PLDT would really like to see all phones working."

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

Travails of ATM client

I don't know if the PLDT cable trouble had anything to do with automated teller machines (ATMs) around Malate, Ermita and Vito Cruz going offline last week. I received this complaint from a reader who related her "infuriating experience" (her own words) looking for a BPI teller machine that was working.

At Robinson's mall, both ATMs were unavailable. She could not make a check deposit to or withdraw from her account. She walked over to the BPI ATMs outside Midland Plaza, just across from Robinson's, where she also did not have any luck. She added that the teller machines on Padre Faura near Adriatico street were likewise "unavailable" for transaction.

The day before, the machine on Vito Cruz, outside the BPI office, was also unavailable. Inside Shopwise on Vito Cruz, the ATM was not dispensing money.

Coincidence or not, I was at Union Bank on Vito Cruz sometime last week when the cashiers' machines also went offline. As I waited for the line to be restored, I saw how the bank's business was put on hold, and how several customers were turned away.

Terror credit collectors

Last week, a reader sent me an urgent e-mail asking where she could complain about aggressive credit collectors who had caused her "mental anguish."

She wrote: "I have no intention of fleeing my debts, but because of the series of crises that I have been going through, I have not been able to pay my account. People who claim to be collectors, call our office and talk with anybody about my unsettled debts.

"I've already received two letters from two different law offices (saying) they will file a civil case against me. I've also received threat that a sheriff would garnish our property, etc.

"Do I have a right to complain regarding the harassment they are doing to me? Please tell me what to do. I am really bothered by these calls and letters."

The complainant should get a reply from Fe de la Cruz, director of the corporate affairs office of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas who received a copy of the e-mail. De la Cruz advised victims of harassment by credit collectors to send their complaints and inquiries to her office (e-mail address: fdelacruz@bsp.gov.ph or mail to Corporate Affairs Office, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, BSP Bldg., Vito Cruz, Manila).

By the way, de la Cruz disclosed that the BSP and the banking industry were coming up soon with something like a code of ethics that would cover, among other concerns, credit collection, loans and, most likely, ATM.

> Greatly inconvenienced are folks who cannot access the Internet and their e-mail accounts

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Gourmet Classes with Chef Dennis Hipolito

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About Chef Dennis: Dean's List graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY/Food Stylist* Owner of Joconde Cakes* Took over classes from the Famed Gourmet, Mme. Aquino Lichauco in New Manila*Trained under the tutelage of World Pastry Cup Champion En-Ming Hsu of the Ritz Carlton Chicago (a Four Seasons Hotel), Dan Budd of Park Avenue Café Chicago, Cake Stylist- Betty Van Norstrand, Food Stylist-Delores Custer and other instructors in the Philippines

May 7, 2005: SENSATIONAL FRENCH DESSERTS (A Sampling of Some French Classics) NEW CLASS French Macaroons, Strawberry Cream and Custard Tart, Triple Chocolate Bavarian Delight (Three Layer Bavarois Torte), Walnut Dacquoise Torte with Vanilla Cream-P1600

May 14, 2005: DIVINE CHOCOLATE* DESSERTS (The Name Says it All) NEW CLASS Chocolate Midnight Cake, Chocolate Torte with Silky Crème Brulee Filling, White Chocolate Surprise Crinkles, Chocolate Upside Down Cake with Caramelized Nuts-P1600 *Using Callebaut Chocolates

May 21, 2005: SPECIAL CAKES AND TORTES (Simply Melts in the Mouth) NEW CLASS Dulce de Leche Caramel Torte, Almond Brickle Yema Cake, Austrian Fruit Torte, Fantastic White Chocolate Cake -P1600

May 28, 2005: LIQUEURED DESSERTS (Liqueur Adds Mystery to These Fabulous Desserts) NEW CLASS Bailey's Cream Indulgence (Torte), Mochaccino Mousse with Oreo Crust, Chocolate GOO Torte (Dark Chocolate Layer Cake with Chocolate GOO), Bananas Foster Tart-P1600

*CLASSES ARE: 1:00PM-4:30PM, (Limited Seats Available)

*Classes include: Ingredients, Recipe Hand Outs, and Product Shares. *For Inquiries and Reservations: Please call or text 0917-8486656 or email us at gourmetpastry@aol.com. LOOK for GIRARD or YVETTE.

May cooking classes for kids

MAYA Kitchen is holding the Young People's Cook-in for teens 11 and up, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., May 10 and 12, Tuesday and Thursday.

It covers basic cooking and baking techniques in food preparation including food presentation and styling with edible garniture. It will also teach how to cook Chicken Gumbo, Pork Dumpling, Shrimp Teriyaki, Dancing Swan Puff, Plate-size Cookies, Pork Cutlets, Molded Coleslaw, Butter Pecan Rolls and Chocolate Chiffon Dessert, among others.

On May 11 and 13, Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 a.m.-12 noon, the Junior Culinary Workshop for Boys and Girls Aged 6-10, will teach Hygiene, Sanitation and Safety in the Kitchen; kitchen math and conversion, table setting and napkin folding. Students will also learn simple but delicious recipes including Rich Egg Soup, Macaroni and Beef Dinner, Painted Cookie Bunches, Very Veggie Soup, Chicken Kebabs, Torpedo Sandwich and Fruity Muffins.

A selection of hands-on courses will be offered May 3-6, Tuesday-Friday. Cooking I covers proper hygiene, sanitation and safety; nutrition and nutritional cooking; stocks, soups and sauces and its 1001 application to poultry, fish, shellfish, fruits and vegetables; common herbs and spices; purchasing; marketing and proper storage; menu planning; simple garnish and plate presentation. An actual cooking workshop on the preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert will be conducted.

Baking I teaches the fundamentals of baking including techniques in the preparation of pies, quick breads, cakes and more. Participants get a free cookbook.

Visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays to Saturdays) at the 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City or call 892 1185 or 8925011 local 108. E-mail mkitchen@ultilmate.info.com.ph.

The Maya Kitchen
CULINARY ARTS CENTER

SUMMER COOKING WORKSHOP FOR KIDS AND ADULTS - PART 2

Whether you are a kid, teen or adult, Maya Kitchen's culinary workshops will develop and enhance your culinary skills. From basic kitchen skills through classic sauces, the range of techniques covered will teach you the art and science of cooking as you develop efficiency, confidence and competence in the kitchen. Join us for the one or for the entire series. Expand your skills, enjoy great recipes and have fun!

Young People's Cook-In for teens 11 and up: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. P2,000 per batch. *Coverage:* Basic cooking and baking techniques in food preparation including food presentation and styling with edible garniture.
3rd batch: May 10 & 12 (T&Th) Chicken Gumbo, Pork Dumpling, Shrimp Teriyaki, Dancing Swan Puff, Plate-size Cookies; Pork Cutlets, Molded Coleslaw, Butter Pecan Rolls, Chocolate Chiffon Dessert.
4th batch: May 18 & 20 (W&F) 3-cheese Lasagna, Frosted Ribbon Loaf, Apple Strudel, Cream Cheese Pie; Pumpkin Soup, Party Chicken Salad, Crusty Bread Bowl, Butter Raisin Loaf.

Junior Culinary Workshop for boys and girls aged 6-10: 8:30 a.m. - 12 nn. P1,500 per batch. *Coverage:* Hygiene Sanitation & Safety in the Kitchen, kitchen math, table setting and napkin folding.
3rd batch: May 11 & 13 (W&F) Rich Egg Soup, Macaroni & Beef Dinner, Painted Cookie Bunches; Very Veggie Soup, Chicken Kebabs, Torpedo Sandwich, Fruity Muffins.
4th batch: May 17 & 19 (T-Th) Porcupine Fish Balls, Carbonara Bacon & Cream; Spaghetti, Jigsaw Sandwiches, Banana Nog; Hotdog Hoagies, Chocolate Beehives, Mister Bean Bun.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON (Adults only. Limited enrolment. Pre-registration required.)

Cooking I: May 3-6 (T-F) 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation and safety; Nutrition and Nutritional Cooking; stocks, soups and sauces and its 1001 application to poultry, fish, shellfish, fruits and vegetables; common herbs and spices; purchasing; marketing and proper storage; menu planning; simple garnish and plate presentation. Plus actual cooking workshop on the preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert. P4,000.

Baking I: May 3-6 (T-F) 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Basic basics of baking including techniques applied to preparation of bread, quickbread, pies, cakes and more. P3,000 with free cookbook.

Waitering & Bartending Basics: May 14 & 21 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Basic setup, suggestive selling techniques, serving and bussing out, napkin folding & skirting, classification of wine and spirits, types of glasses, mixing and serving drinks. P2,500.

Japanese Cooking (All new recipes!): May 17-19 (T-Th) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Chicken Saute in Anchovy Sauce, Japanese Hamburger Onion Sauce, Mixed Mushroom Omelet, Chicken Katsu with Cheese, Pumpkin Croquettes, Tuna Gratin, Chicken Cream Stew, Rolled Cabbage with Meat Fish, Dry Curry Rice, Macaroni Salad, Steam Chicken Salad, Sweet & Sour Pork Japanese Style, Sauteed Pork & Cabbage with Miso, Ham & Potato Curry, Steamed Chicken with Goma Sesame Sauce, Japanese Fried Chicken, Japanese Meatball, Japanese Crab Omelet, Ground Beef with Lettuce Tsutsumi wrap, Shrimp Wonton Soup Japanese Style, Grilled Tofu with Ground Pork by Chef Seiji Kamura P5,000.

Cooking 2: May 24-27 (T-F) 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Review of Basic Culinary Principles; Meal Management; Knowledge of Herbs, Spices & Condiments; Basic Maintenance & Preservation of Food (Proper Receiving, Storage & Preparation); Menu Planning, Kitchen Accounting & Recipe Formulation; Actual Workshop on International Cuisine, Ethnic Cooking, Hors d'oeuvre, Salad, Cooked/Cured/Prepared food & Quick Desserts; Market Basket Activity. Free Mix & Match 3 cookbook. P5,000.

Baking 2: May 24-27 (T-F) 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Baking ingredients and their functions, baker's percentage / math, commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies, cakes, pastries and bakery products including costing, batching applicable to bakery operation. P3,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at *mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph*

New resto in Davao airport

SUKA at Sili has opened a branch at the Davao International Airport.

Owned by high school friends Edgar Ang, Ronald "Buboy" Bangayan and Freddie Boy Pineda, it offers mainly *inihaw* items.

For *sawsawan*, the restaurant uses coconut-based vinegar or *sukang galing sa tuba*. The vinegar is kept in attractive glass containers imported from Italy.

Diners can choose from mild, sour and very sour.

Suka at Sili also has branches at Sta. Mesa Heights in Quezon City and The Venue compound.

Many ways with chicken

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts is offering the following classes:

April 28: Everyday Chicken 2 (all new)—Lemon Grass Honey Chicken, Perfect Chicken a la Kiev with Kiev Rice, Delicious Provencal Roast Chicken, The Best Brine-cured Fried Chicken Recipes Ever, Chicken a la King with Homemade Butter Noodles, side dishes, dessert

April 29: Asian Barbecue Meals—Korean Beef Rib Barbecue with Kimchi Fried Rice, Authentic Indonesian Satays (beef, chicken, pork, lamb, seafood), Authentic Peanut Sauce, Nasi Goreng, Vietnamese Shrimp on Sugar Cane, Pork Sticks, Crabmeat Fried Rice.

May 2: Middle Eastern Food 101 (all new)—Falafel and Yogurt Dip with Pita, Beef Tagine with Couscous, Lamb and Merguez Stew with Basmati, Shish Kebabs, Fish in Vine Leaves, dessert

May 4: Oysters and Mussels (all new)—Ways of Serving Oysters and Mussels, over 12 recipes (baked, fresh with sauces, salsas and side dishes)

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, 6474744, 0917-8399888.

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1. MAY 2 - 6 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING - P10,500.
Learn the practical & easy method of making icing flowers, borders, scrolls & strings, cake designing, sugar molding, color flow, color technique, wedding cake assembly. NEXT SCHED : JUNE 6 - 10
2. MAY 7 // 8:00AM - 12:00NN - MUFFINS - MUFFINS - P3,000
Cinnamon - Crunch Sweet Potato, Onion & Shallots, Country Apple Sauce, Choco Chip, Carrot Nut, Banana Walnut Muffins. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 4
3. MAY 9 - 12 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD - P10,500. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 13 - 16
4. MAY 11 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT - P4,500.
Using lace mats, New Rolling Pin w/ Designs Swags & Ribbons,Non-Stick boards w/ Flowers & Veiners & Quilting. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 15
5. MAY 14 // 8:00AM - 12:00NN - SUGAR FREE BAKING 1 - P3,000.
Banana, Apple Almond, Bars, Carrot Cake Choco Nut Cake, Whole Wheat Bread, Raisin Bread. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 11
6. MAY 16 - 20 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P12,500. (for whole courses)
P2,500 - MAY 16 - Cakes: plain, mocha, choco, orange chiffon cakes, pound cake, sponge cake, moist choco cake, mamon
P2,500 - MAY 17 - Cakes & Roll: malacañang roll, chocolate roll, taisan, brownies, pineapple upside-down, custard cake.
P2,750 - MAY 18 - Breads: pan de sal, dinner rolls, buns, pan de coco, ensaymada, honey bread & white bread.
P2,500 - MAY 19 - Pies: Buko pie, custard pie, pineapple pie, apple pie, mango pie, empanada
P2,750 - MAY 20 - Pastries & Cookies: caramel tart, almond tart, San Nicolas cookies, camachile, lengua de gato, coconut macaroons. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 20 - 24
7. MAY 16 - 20 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH PORCELAIN RECIPE - P4,500.
(Each set is lesson covered for one day) - a) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-waling, b) Rose, Catleya, Cymbidium; c) Magnolia Gerbera, Lilies; d) Open Rose, Hydrangeas, Grapes; e) Mask or Maskara - of your choice
***COLD PORCELAIN DOLLS for appointment *** NEXT SCHED: JUNE 20 - 24
8. APR. 30 // 8:00AM - 12:00NN - SUGAR FREE 2 - P3,000.
Brownie Supreme, Choco Chiffon, Orange Chiffon, Banana Pecan Cookies, Spiced Raisin Cookies, Chewy Golden Cookies Baking for Diabetics. NEXT SCHED: MAY 21 & JUN 18
9. MAY 23 - 27 // 8:00AM - 5:30PM - SPECIAL BAKING - P13,500.
For whole courses or Learn to make 30 Kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has a different icing & decoration. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 27 - JULY 1
10. MAY 28 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - TAPAS - P3,000.
Spanish Omelette, Fish Pastries, Potato & Ham Croquettes Pescado frito, Albondigas, Ensalada de Pollo & Mallorcan Pizza. NEXT SCHED: JUNE 25
11. // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - EDIBLE GELATIN FLOWERS W/O SUGAR - P2,500. BY APPOINTMENT

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"THE PHILIPPINE FLOWERS IN SUGAR & CELEBRATION BOOK 1,"
"CAKE TOPS WITH PHILIPPINE FLAIR BOOK 2,"
"CAKE COLLECTION BOOK 3,"
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Catering seminar May 9-13

MB&G/ProActive is now accepting reservations for the Managing a Catering Business Seminar-Workshop, 1-5 p.m., May 9-13, at Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City.

The five-day program will include lectures and hands-on workshops on planning the menu, equipment and staffing; cost control; room arrangements, among others.

Call 6871787 or 0915-4315375. Seminar fee is P5,000 per participant, inclusive of manual and handouts, workshop materials and equipment, snacks, and certificate of completion.

MB&G/ProActive has been in the business of training food service executives and hospitality business owners since 1989.

SBD queen answers FAQs

From page D1

Aside from delivering all three phases of the diet, all our restaurants have their own South Beach Diet offerings.

We also service the needs of our clients by answering their questions concerning their diet, fitness and wellness via the fitness and wellness consultancy firm Belenus, owned and operated by my partner, Alvin Lim, a fitness enthusiast.

For Margarita's services, call Sostanza Healthline at 4390603 and Maricel Ratisa at 0915-4334932.

There never seems to be enough space on KR! I wanted to enumerate all the new SBD offerings in Margaritas three restaurants but won't have the space. So you just have to go and visit.

Some things on the menu I found interesting were Cibo's *Insalata Dagnello* (stewed lamb salad with goat cheese) with sugar-free vinaigrette. Café Bola's *sinigang na lechon*, fat skimmed off. Pepato's roast *capretto* (baby goat).

Margarita, we thank you for many things... The brand new bodies, the convenience of diet food delivery, the regained confidence to expose the once "just" hidden cleavage and caterpillar thighs are but a few. But the best gift you've given us is the comforting thought of knowing that you're there when we've had three slices of cake and when the evil side of bingeing takes its sweet revenge!

Wishing you and Alvin, nothing but the best, in everything that you do!

Next week, my cooking thin salad dressings and more answers to your diet woes.

My May cooking class schedule is out. Call 9289296 and 6335162.

For questions and comments, text 0917-8399888.

In a class - on your own

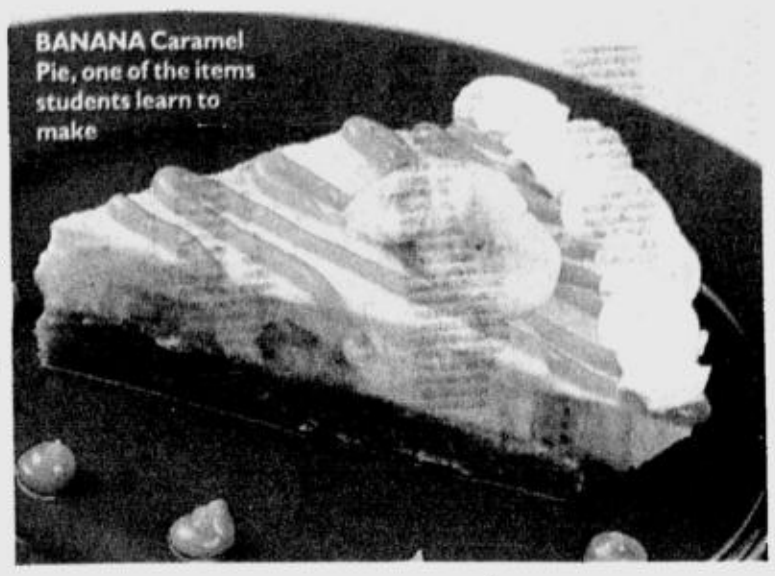
COOKING Basics Culinary Studio makes learning fun for students, with individual kitchen islands where they can do their own cooking.

AT THE GROUND floor of a high-rise residential condominium in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, is Cooking Basics Culinary Studio, a cooking school with a big difference.

Set up by business partners Ana Park, Melanie Cruz and Pria Solon, Cooking Basics lets its students experience hands-on food preparation in individual cooking stations while the class is in session.

The school has four individual cooking stations set up as separate kitchen islands that are fully equipped, stocked and functional. Students can do the recipes independently as the class progresses, making the lesson a complete sensory experience.

The owners were trained in Ecole des Roches in Switzerland and Peter Kump in New York. They set up the school because they always believed that learning cooking went beyond memorizing a recipe.



BANANA Caramel Pie, one of the items students learn to make

Park said the training included knowing the touch, feel and smell of the dish throughout the process.

"Students often got the impression the task was easy when they merely watched an instructor do something," Cruz said. "However, once they tried doing the recipes at home, they often found that it was actually more difficult. The experience often proved discouraging."

By giving them the opportunity to try it right there in their cooking stations, they would know what to expect when they got home, Solon added. She said she and her partners were at the school to teach students the techniques to make cooking easier and more enjoyable.

Solon said it was not just the eating, but also the cooking, of food that should be enjoyed.

Cooking Basics offers a comprehensive list of classes for different cuisines, as well as baking classes for a wide age group. Classes are kept small so each student would be able to do hands-on work and the instructors could pay attention to each student's needs.

Cooking Basics does not only offer cooking and baking lessons but, on the insistence of its clientele, also holds cooking and baking parties.

Cruz said kids enjoyed tremendously preparing some of the food for their own party. Some women even had their bridal showers in the school to help the bride-to-be stay on the path to her man's heart-through his stomach.

This summer, Cooking Basics has prepared a line-up of classes and activities, especially for kids and teens who are on vacation from school. Call 7710082 or text 0917-3262944. You can also e-mail cookingbasics@pacific.net.ph.

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Sylvia Reynoso-Gala — GOLD MEDALIST Academia de Gastronomas Madrid, Spain - 1964
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

LEARN AND EARN PRACTICAL, EASY, EXACT RECIPES

Leni Reynoso-Araullo
CERTIFIED WILTON METHOD SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR, Chicago, U.S.A.
Masters in Cake Decorating, Wilton School, Chicago, U.S.A., 1974 under Martha & Stanley Wilton
Graduate : Chicago School of Cooking and Catering
Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

APR 28 THU 2:30 - 5:30PM - SPECIAL LESSON ON MORE MONEY-MAKING OPPORTUNITIES - SAVORY STYLE FRIED CHICKEN, ROAST MONTEREY PORK LIEMPO, MRS. OLIVIA TEE'S FOOKIEN STYLE AMOY FRESH LUMPIA, PORK SIOMAI W/ QUAIL EGGS, HONGKONG SHRIMP SIOMAI, HACAO (SHRIMP DUMPLING W/ HOMEMADE CLEAR WRAPPER). **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

APR 30 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM THAI NOODLES, RICE, DESSERTS 3! (9 RECIPES) - THAI STREET NOODLES, PAD THAI, CURRIED NOODELS W/ BEEF, CRAB FRIED RICE, PORK FRIED RICE, BLACK RICE PUDDING, TAPIOCA PUDDING, THAI CUSTARD, SQUASH W/ COCONUT CREAM **P1,500. BY ERNEST & SYLVIA**

MAY 3 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - PUT UP A STEAKHOUSE - LEARN THE TECHNIQUES TO COOKING THE JUICIEST MONTEREY PORTERHOUSE STEAKS, BEEF TENDERLOIN STEAK A LA POBRE, DELICIOUS HOMEMADE GRAVY, CAESAR SALAD, ROAST ORANGE PORK LOIN, BEST-SELLING BAKED SPAGHETTI W/ 2 SAUCES, MAKE YOUR OWN CREPES SAMURAI **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 4 WED 2:30 - 6:30PM - BAGUIO'S FAMOUS RAISIN BREAD, AMERICAN TASTY, HONEY BREAD, BUTTER BREAD, BRAIDED CHEESE BREAD, MORELLA & ERNEST BIG PANDESAL, SUPER-SOFT CARMELITE BREAD IN A BUNDT PAN. DELICIOUS BREAD MADE EASY! **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 5 THU 2:30 - 5:30PM - DELICIOUS RESTAURANT SPECIALTIES YOU WILL LOVE TO DO AT HOME! - GARLIC-ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN W/ PEPPER STEAK SAUCE, MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN CUBES SALPICADO, FETTUCINE W/ 3 DIFFERENT SAUCES. **PESTO (GARLIC BASIL), BLACK SQUID INK, CREAMY MAYO CHEESE.** HIGHLANDS SALAD W/ OLIVES & BLUE CHEESE DRESSINGS, HOT CARAMEL BANANA FUDGE BROWNIE PIE W/ CREAM, PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF CENTURY TUNA BURGERS, BEEF BURGERS W/ DIFFERENT DRESSINGS. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 6 FRI 2:30 - 5:30PM - 6 HOTSHOT CHICKEN RECIPES. TENDER ROAST MAGNOLIA CHICKEN W/ SAUSAGE-APPLE STUFFING, CRISPY CHICKEN ROLLS, CRUNCHY CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS W/ CREAMY GRAVY, BAKED NUT STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS; CHICKEN CROQUETTES W. CHEESEY SAUCE; CHICKEN BREASTS W/ MUSHROOM GRAVY ON FRENCH BAKER'S WHOLE WHEAT BREAD. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 7 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - 10 MINI CHEWY BARS. FOR CHILDREN 8 YRS & ABOVE. WALNUT BARS, MANGO BARS, LEMON BARS, BANANA CHIP BARS, PRUNE BARS, DATE NUT SQUARES, RAISIN BARS, CHOCO-MERINGUE BARS, RICOA CHOCO CHIP BARS, LEMONY NUT BARS **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 9 MON 2:30 - 6:15PM - LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESEROLLS, SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL, PANDESAL W/ FILLING, CINNAMON ROLLS. BREAD-BAKING MADE EASY! **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 10 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES 1; DELICIOUS KAMAMESHI; YAKITORI (JAPANESE CHICKEN BARBECUE IN SKEWERS). TONKATSU (BREADED PORK CHOPS); GRILLED JAPANESE BEEFSTEAK W/ BELL PEPPER & MONGO SPROUTS; MISO SOUP; SUNOMONO W. DILIS; VERY DELICIOUS SUKIYAKI! **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 11 & 18 - 2 WEDS - 2:30 - 5:30PM - P1,800 - MONEY MAKING CHOCOLATE FANTASIES COURSE - - (#1 SELLER IN MANILA) - CHOCOLATE-COATED POPCORNS; CREAM-FILLED CUPCAKES; STICKY WALNUT BROWNIES; CHUNKY CHOCO COOKIES; GERMAN STYLE FUDGY CAKE W/ ICING; CHOCOLATE TURTLE CHEESECAKE; SMOOTH CHOCOLATE MOUSSE; SYRUPY BROWNIES; WALNUT CRUNCH BROWNIES; NEW ROCKY ROAD BROWNIES; THE BEST MELT-IN-THE-MOUTH TIRAMISU#2. **BY ERNEST**

MAY 12 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - PRACTICAL, EASY, DELICIOUS THAI COOKING 1 - CHICKEN GALANGA COCONUT SOUP, RED CURRY CHICKEN, GREEN CURRY CHICKEN, BEEF CURRY, CHICKEN ON A BED OF SPINACH W/ PEANUT SAUCE, BAKED RICE IN PINEAPPLE SHELL, THAI ICED TEA & THAI ICED COFFEE. **P1,500. BY ERNEST & SYLVIA**

MAY 13 FRI 2:30 - 5:30PM - EASY HONGKONG RESTAURANT COURSE - SIZZLING CHINESE STYLE STEAKS W/ MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN; SHRIMP & CRAB CLAWS & BALLS IN NEST W/ SWEET & SOUR SAUCE; HONGKONG STYLE ASSORTED VEGETABLE PLATTER; MAGNOLIA STIR FRIED CHICKEN BREAST W/ CASUY; LAPALAPU FILLET IN CREAM OF CORN SAUCE; LOURDES FAT CRABS COOKED IN GINGER-GARLIC SPRITE. **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 14 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A COZY KOREAN RESTAURANT. LEARN TO MAKE THESE KOREAN SPECIALTIES: KIMCHI;SPINACH SALAD; MIXED RICE W/ KOREAN BEEF; BEAN SPROUTS; KOREAN PORK BARBECUE; DEEP FRIED BEEF IN SKEWERS; CRAB & PORK FRIED RICE; KOREAN STYLE SOTANGHON; OJINGKO POKUM (SQUID IN HOT SAUCE); ROSE KUI; KOREAN BEEF STEW-TOPPED RICE PLUS KITCHEN-TESTED BONUS RECIPES. **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 16 MON 2:30 - 5:30PM - FISH 'N CHIPS W/ MAYO MUSTARD DILL SAUCE. SPICY BARBECUED MONTEREY BABY BACK RIBS W/ CHILI SAUCE; EASY CAESAR SALAD TOPPED W/ GRILLED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BREASTS; DELICIOUS CAMPBELL'S CHICKEN CASSEROLE W/ BABY POTATOES & CARROTS. ERNEST'S FRESH ASPARAGUS W. CREAMY TOPPING; PHILADELPHIA CREAM CHEESE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE IN RAMIKENS TOPPED W/ RICOA CHOCOLATE BAR. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 17 TUE 2:30 - 5:30PM DELICIOUS CHICKEN CORDON BLEU W/ CREAMY SAUCE; PAELLA NEGRA - SPICY SQUID RINGS IN GARLIC SAUCE; DEBONED LEMONY SOY CHICKEN ON WILD RICE; ORIENTAL SPRING ROLLS W/ SWEET CHILI SAUCE; EASY TIRAMISU. **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 19 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - THAI COOKING 2 - THAI CHICKEN BARBECUE, 5-SPICE BARBECUED PORK SPARERIBS, THAI CHICKEN SATAY, THAI FRIED FISH CAKES, GARLIC SQUIDS, CURRIED FISH WRAPPED IN BANANA LEAVES. **P1,500. BY ERNEST & SYLVIA**

MAY 20 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR - LEARN TO NAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES. MOZARELLA-TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA (BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN), THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFFERENT TOPPINGS, FETTUCINE ALFREDO, SPAGHETTI, CARBONARA, BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON, PEACH-FILLED CREPES W/ FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS & SANDWICHES. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 21 SAT 2:30 - 6:15PM - LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER! THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI, KUA PAO (PEKING SIOPAO W/ MEAT FILLING & PICKLED MUSTASA), FISH HEAD SOUP, CAMARON RELLENADO, QUIKIAM W/ RADISH SALAD, STEAMED LAPULAPU **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 24 TUE 2:30 - 5:50PM - MONEY MAKING FASTFOOD RECIPES! YUMMY CHICKEN INASAL, S & R STYLE HERBED ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN, CAJUN BURGERS W/ SPECIAL SAUCE, SPICY MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BURGERS, BAKED POTATO CHIP MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BREASTS W/ PESTO LINGUINNE. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 25 WED 2:30 - 5:30PM - MONEY MAKING CHINESE FASTFOOD RECIPES - WONTON NOODLE SOUP; DELICIOUS MAKI SOUP; STIR FRIED LOMI; KUTCHAY DUMPLINGS W/ EASY TO MAKE HOMEMADE WRAPPER; PORK CURRY RICE; AUTHENTIC CHINESE STYLE SHRIMP FRIED RICE. **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAY 26 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - 9 MONEY MAKING FOR TEENS & ADULT BEGINNERS; CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES, CHOCOLATE CRINKLES, BUTTERSCOTCH BROWNIES, LENGUA DE GATO, CHEWY MALLOW BARS, RUSSIAN TEA COOKIES, VIRGIE PANTALEON'S DATE WALNUT COOKIES, SPECIAL POLVORON, LEBANESE DATE BOAT TARTS. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 28 SAT 2:30 - 5:30PM - MAX'S STYLE FRIED CHICKEN - JOLLIBEE STYLE CHICKEN W/ GRAVY; CHICKEN BURGER; DELICIOUS POTATO SALAD; SIZZLING GRILLED PORK CHOPS; 4 SEASONS PUNCH; RIPE MANGO JUICE; MELON TAPIOCA W/ SAGO; GREEN MANGO JUICE. **P1,200 BY SYLVIA**

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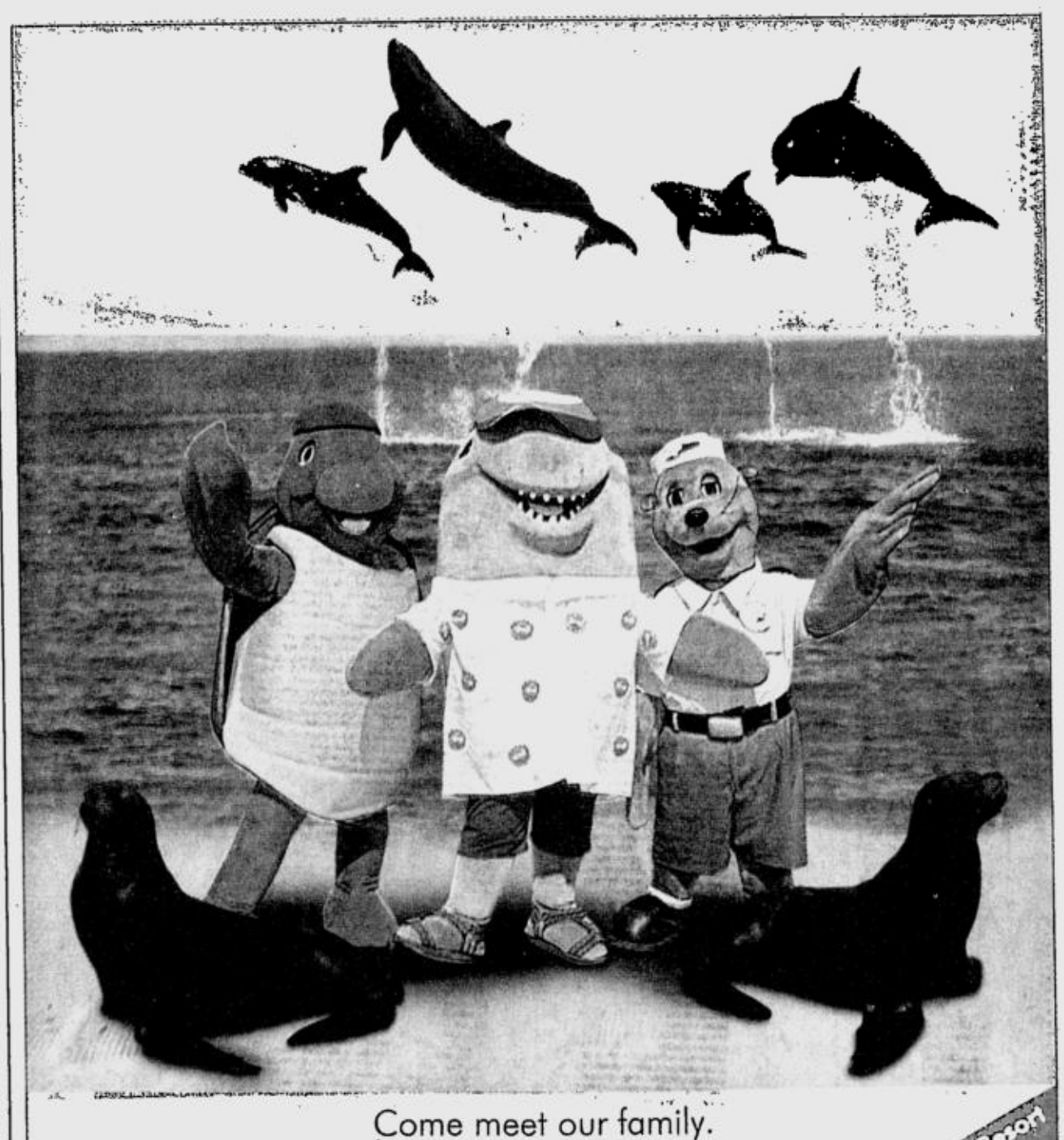

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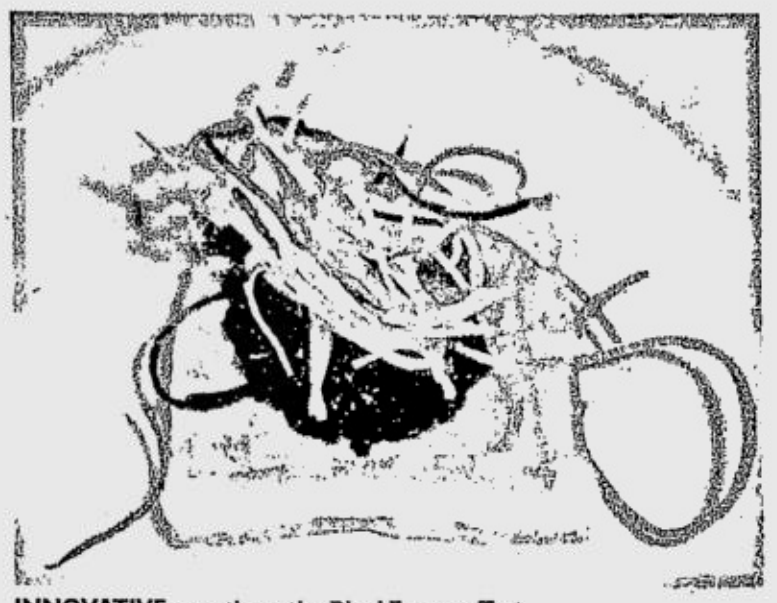
M CAFÉ'S culinary artist Sau del Rosario; Les Toques Blanches president and Werdenberg Int'l. general manager Othmar Frei; Uva and Embassy executive chef Fernando Aracama; corporate chef of the Discovery Hotel group, David Pardo de Ayala; and Discovery Suites executive chef Rick Abasta



INNOVATIVE appetizer: the Bicol Express Tart

Dinner at the Chefs Table

LES Toques Blanches Philippines, a respected culinary organization founded more than two decades ago, held recently its Chefs Table dinner at the Museum Café, a.k.a. M.

Composed of over 60 chefs, restaurant owners, professionals and gourmands, Les Toques Blanches organizes the Chefs Table dinner to visit and rate a newly opened establishment such as M. The dinner was organized by Cirkulo Restaurant's executive chef Jay Gamboa.

M Outdoor Café's Sau del Rosario prepared an eight-course modern Filipino menu,.starting with Grilled Aklan Oysters, followed by the innovative Bicol Express Tart. The Bamboo Steamed Foie Gras was a hit, as was the Hot and Sour Guava Soup with Poached Pacific Scallops.

Entrées included the Aligue Risotto and the Char-grilled Wagyu Beef. Dinner was capped by an M dessert sampler of modern Asian sweets, including the Jackfruit Sansrival, Durian Carabao's Milk Custard and Ube Brazo de Mercedes.

M owner Annabel Wisniewski and sons Andrej and Martin welcomed the Les Toques Blanches

DINNER/ E4

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Fly to Singapore for only US$79

THE SINGAPORE-based value-for-money airline Jetstar Asia has begun flying daily roundtrip flights between Manila and Singapore.

To celebrate the Manila launch, a special introductory price for one-way airfares, from Manila to Singapore was offered at US$59. After which, everyday low fares will start from US$79. Tickets are available for purchase by logging onto www.jetstarasia.com or by calling (632)810-4744 in Metro Manila.

Jetstar Asia is the first low-cost carrier to attain the rights to fly to Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Low-cost carriers or airlines offering budget fares have become a trend in Asia and governments are responding to the trend to the boost tourism industry.

Jetstar Asia CEO Ken Ryan says the affordable rates will encourage more Filipinos to travel to Singapore, a prime tourist destination.

"Our success will depend on our ability to grow the market. By becoming the first value-for-money airline to serve several major population centers, as well as opening new routes, we help make air travel more accessible and more affordable to more people."

The Singapore-based value-for-money airline began operations in December 2004 with daily flights between Hong Kong and Singapore. Routes to Taiwan (Taipei) and Thailand (Bangkok) soon followed and more intra-Asia destinations will come on line in the second quarter of 2005.

All Jetstar Asia aircrafts are brand new Airbus A320s. Customers are provided with assigned seating and a generous 20 kg baggage allowance.

Jetstar Asia is a partnership between Qantas, Singaporean businessmen Tony Chew and FF Wong and Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited.

AIR21 DRAWS HEBIGATING PA-PREMYO WINNERS

Three winners of Air21's Hebigating Pa-Premyo promo were drawn on separate dates at the SPL boardroom in Makati in the presence of representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The winners are as follows: Phillip Lawrenson from Boracay, Aklan, Ely Tan of Tondo, Manila and Cheryl Mae Nolasco of San Juan, Metro Manila. Each received P2,500 worth of SM Gift Certificates delivered to them by Air21. Present during the first Hebigating Pa-Premyo Electronic Draw held last Dec. 23 (from left): Mail and More's OIC marketing head Edcel Bergado and operations manager Rhea Topacio; Air21 senior brand specialist Irene Grivas and Air21 marketing manager Pin Rutaquio; DTI Representative Bing Capua; and DOS-I retail marketing specialist Hannah Hingco and DOS-I marketing services manager Steven Valenzuela.

DOT, Globe present 'Southern Feat: The Trailblazing Challenge'

AFTER its first two highly successful runs dubbed "Island Quest: The Nautical Highway Adventure" and "Tropical Jewels: The Visayan Charm," the Department of Tourism and Globe Handyphone present its last summer run for the season with "Southern Feat: The Trailblazing Challenge" scheduled on May 20 to 24.

Its third summer run which is set to explore destinations in Northern Luzon is set on April 29 to May 3. The "North Philippines Expedition: The Great Outdoor Escapade" will conquer Bayombong, Banaue, Ilagan, Peñablanca, Pagudpud, Laoag and Vigan.

"Southern Feat" is set to challenge a person's limits in extreme outdoor activities like white water rafting in Cagayan de Oro, river cruising in Kalinawan River in Agusan del Norte and surfing in Siargao. It is organized by the Island Caravan Consortium composed of Annset Holidays, Baron Travel, Marsman Tours and Travel, Rajah Tours, Sampaguita Travel, Travel Edge and T.R.I.P.S. Travel with Skoal Advertising as event organizer and marketing arm. For inquiries, call tel. nos. 811-4163 or 817-7620.

SM FOUNDATION WINS AGORA AWARD FOR ADVOCACY MARKETING

SM Foundation, the socio-civic arm of the SM Group of Companies, received the Outstanding Achievement Award for Advocacy Marketing during the Agora Award's 25th anniversary held recently at the Makati Shangri-La's Rizal Ballroom. Just as SM builds shopping malls around the country, it also reaches out to the less fortunate in the communities its serves through SM Foundation. Established in 1983 by SM founder and chair Henry Sy Sr, the foundation has touched lives of many Filipinos through its four areas of advocacy: education, health oriented projects, mall-based outreach programs, and religious community projects. Photo shows SM Foundation executive director for scholarship program Linda Atayde (third from right) receiving the SM Foundation's award for Outstanding Achievement in Advocacy Marketing during the Agora Awards. Also shown are other awardees: Mercury Drug president Vivian Azcona, Megaworld Corp president Andrew Tan, Julie's Bakeshop president Roberto Gandioco, SL Agritech Corp chair Henry Lim Bon Liong, Festive Foods International Inc president and COO Philip Young and Smart Communications Inc's Anastacio Ramirez.

Scoop your way around the world with Nestlé

THIS summer, you and your family can go on your long-awaited dream vacation not just by saving up but by scooping up and cooling off with Nestlé Ice cream. With its "Scoop-A-Trip" promo, you not only get to enjoy the delicious flavors of Nestlé's frozen treats but even get the chance to escape to the coolest landmark destinations around the world. Say "yes" to the bustling metropolis of New York, "oui" to the chic fashion capital of Paris, "si" to the culinary delights of Italy, and "hai" to rich cultural experiences in Japan.

Just buy specially marked Nestlé Supreme, Classic, Back2Back, Fun Toppings, and Special Edition ice cream variants in any size (1.6 liters, half gallon or one gallon) and look for the winning chip indicating a prize. A family of four stands the chance to win round-trip tickets plus US$1,500 pocket money to any of the following destinations-USA, France, Italy, or Japan. That's four happy families who will be spending their summer vacation in style.

Other treasures include exciting prizes to prepare your family for that trip abroad. Also look out for hundreds of winning chips for Nokia 7260 cellphones, Canon PS A400 digital cameras, Samsonite luggage bags, and O2 XDA II cellphones. Keep in touch wherever you may be and make travel experiences even more lasting and memorable.

What are you waiting for? Make Nestlé Ice Cream a part of every fun family moment and bring everyone closer with each other. You might just find the various sights and sounds of the world as exhilarating as the variety of exciting flavors of Nestlé Ice Cream. Grab them at your favorite supermarkets, groceries, and convenience stores nationwide. Promo ends May 31.

Summer on t

Travel season

opens with 'Island Q

BAKHAWAN Eco-Park, a man-made mangrove forest of 70 hectares, is now a favorite eco-destination in Kalibo, Aklan.

THIS year's summer travel season opened with Quest: The Nautical Highway Adventure", wh tured tourist destinations in Southern Luzon an ern Visayas along the Nautical Highway.

Participants to the caravan were treated to t beaches of Puerto Galera and Boracay while also ing in the rich cultural heritage of the Mangya Calapeños in Oriental Mindoro and the Aklanon lan.

Day 1 of the caravan took travelers from Manil port of Batangas to Puerto Galera. The Pondero Course was a sight to behold with Oriental Mind mous Mt. Halcon at the background. At Talipana elers experienced the life of the Mangyans, the native to the island of Mindoro. Afterwards, th ceeded to Talipanan Beach where they frolicke fine sand, feasted and enjoyed the breeze wi dulging in a beach massage.

Day 2 took participants to the various beaches

AKLAN'S 'Museo it Akean' features the piña clot variety.

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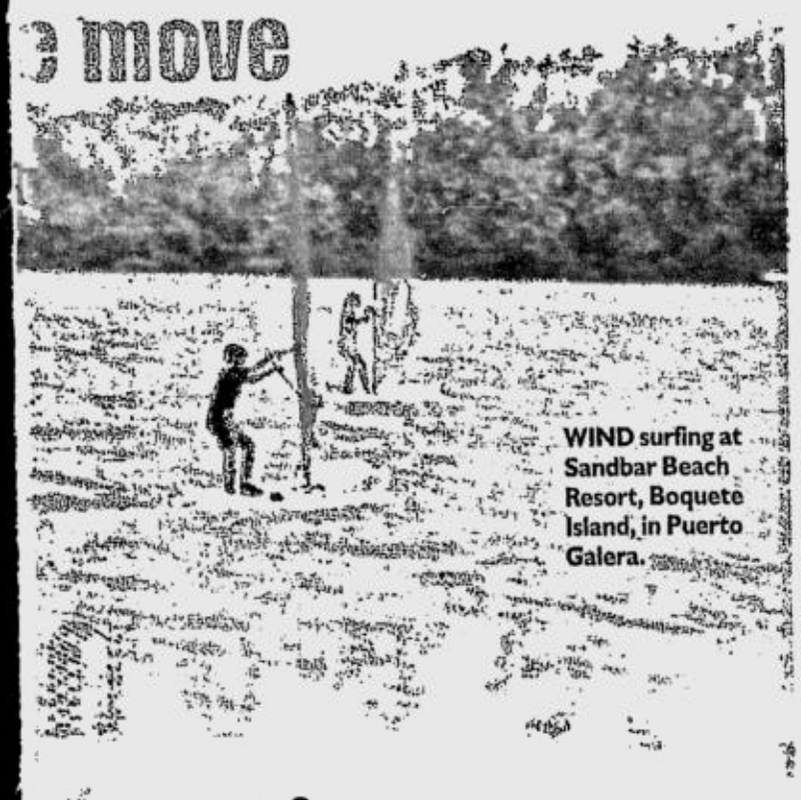


WIND surfing at Sandbar Beach Resort, Boquete Island, in Puerto Galera.

uest'

Text and photos by Joel V. Nigos

Island ch fea- l West- ıe best engag- ns and in Ak- to the a Golf ro's fa- ı, trav- people y pro- on its. ile in- n Puer-

to Galera where they engaged in swimming and snorkeling. The Tamaraw Falls on the way to Calapan City was a refreshing sight. The trip would not be complete without a visit to the newly constructed City Hall, the Calapan Museum, the cathedral and the city proper.

In Day 3, participants had a taste of the trip's ultimate Ro-Ro ride as they traversed the high seas going further down South to Caticlan. Kalibo provided the tour's heritage component with a tour to its museum, its old churches and the Bakhawan eco-park. In Boracay, they experienced the nightlife of one of the best beaches in the world.

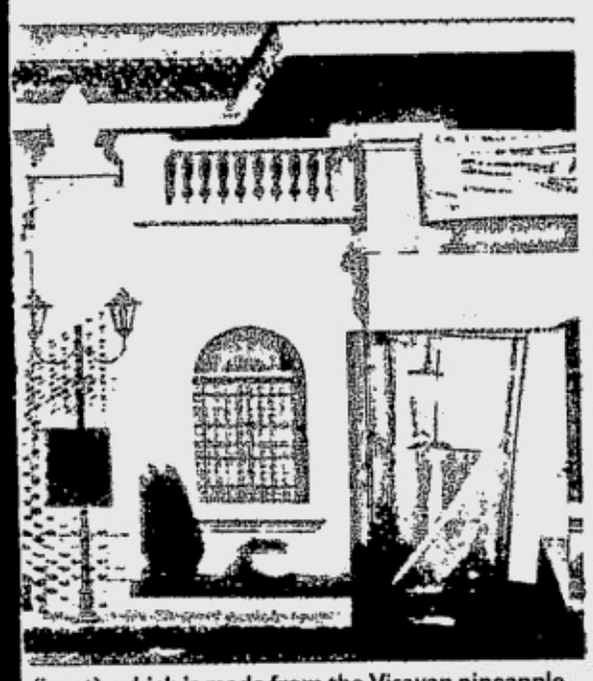
The next day, the white sand and clear waters were just some of Boracay's many attractions. Participants engaged in island-hopping, rode banana boats or just enjoyed its pristine beach. Wall climbing, shopping in its quaint shops, the graduation ceremony and the games capped the full day of fun and activities in this world-famous island.

SHOWING Oriental Mindoro's rich culture, a weaving demonstration in one of the tour's night events.

ADDING local flavor to the trip, these jeepneys took participants to various points in Puerto Galera.

BEHOLD the refreshing sight of Tamaraw Falls in Puerto Galera.

The "Island Quest" adventure was presented by Globe Handyphone and sponsored by the Department of Tourism. It was conceptualized and organized by Skoal Advertising and the Island Caravan Consortium, composed of some of the largest tour operators in the country, with the main objective of promoting inter-regional domestic travel. The group previously handled the highly successful "Explore Caravans" under the "Go North Philippines!" of the Office of Presidential Assistant for North Luzon. The caravan is expected to set the trend for traveling in the country through organized caravan tours along the Nautical Highway System.



(inset), which is made from the Visayan pineapple

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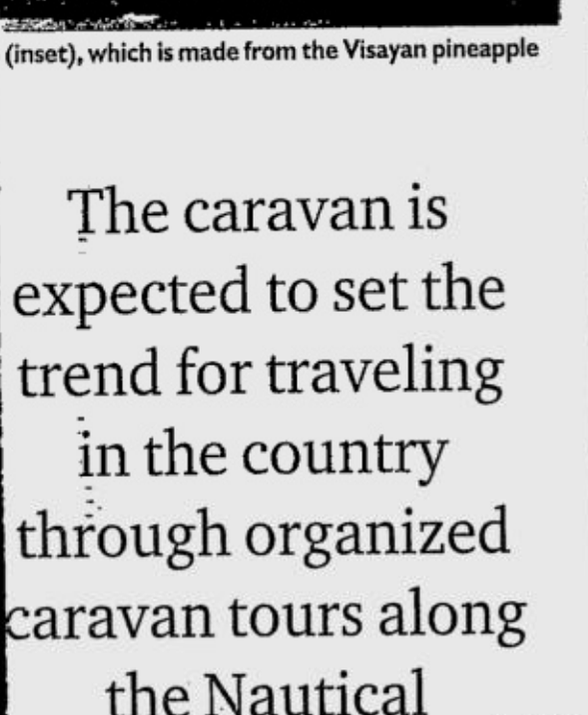

ILL having energy left after a full day of travel and ı, participants joined Patio Pacific's wall climbing mpetition

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ASIAN Chicken Satay at Heaven N' Eggs

SEAFOOD dishes at Bellevue Hotel's Cafe d'Asie

Award-winning chef's recommendations

DINING OUT

AT HERITAGE Hotel'S Hong Kong Golden Pavilion Restaurant, diners can look forward to Chef Kavino Lau's new creations. The award-winning chef presents Crispy Fried Cuttle Fish Roll, Fish Head with Garlic Black Bean Sauce in Basket, Chiu Chow Style Crab Balls, Sate Lamb with Ginger and Onion, Stir Fried Scallop with Mango and Asparagus, Beef Brisket in Clear Soup, Stir Fry Diced Mixed Seafood, Steamed Egg with Dried Scallop and Watercress, Rice Pond Duckling Hot Pot with Black Mushroom and Bamboo Shoot, Crispy Fried Intestine with Pineapple, Pan Fried Upo with Shrimps, Stewed HK Chicken with Ginger in Casserole, Sautéed Ampalaya with Black Bean Dace Fish and Rainbow Bean Curd. Call 8520826/ 8520817.

SUPER Bowl of China Restaurant offers three new crab dishes: Crab with Spicy Pepper, Deep-Fried Crab cooked in Red and Green Peppers and flavored with spicy salt. If you want this crustacean delicacy served with noodles, try Crab with Sotanghon Hot Pot. Steamed Crab (served with ginger and onion leeks in sesame oil) may be light on the tummy but is nonetheless packed with great flavors. Super Bowl of China has branches at Glorietta 4; Jupiter St., Makati City; SM Megastrip; Eastwood, Libis; Festival Mall, Alabang; Greenhills; SM City Fairview; Gateway Mall; and SM City North Edsa. Call 7378888 for delivery services.

MAKATI Shangri-La Manila's Shang Palace brings Dragon Boat Festival this month. Sample Guo Cheng Chong and Kan Shui Chong rice dumplings, Suckling Pig and Barbecued Meats Combination, Sautéed Fresh Scallops and Prawn with Broccoli in XO Sauce, Double-Boiled Black Chicken Soup with Shark's Fin Head, Baked Crab in Portuguese Sauce, Fried Udon Noodle with Seafood and Sauteed Diced Beef with Asparagus in Black Pepper Sauce. Meanwhile, the Lobby Lounge features snack delights like Taro, Tortilla and Wasabi Chips dipped in mango or tomato salsa, Carrots and Daikon Sticks with sweet miso dip, Sesame Walnuts and Shrimp Crackers with Lemongrass Soya Sauce. Call 8138888.

MANDARIN Oriental Manila introduces Kids 'R Free Sunday Lunch Buffet at Paseo Uno and Tin Hau. Paseo Uno features Asian and international cuisines while Tin Hau offers Northern and Southern Chinese specialties. Kids' buffet meal is on-the-house for every full-paying adult. Additional children will be charged kiddie buffet prices. Tin Hau will also hold Hong Kong Vegetable Delight on May 2-15. Call 7508888.

HOLIDAY Inn Resort Clark Field features its themed buffet nights at Mequeni Café. It's Tex-Mex Night every Monday; Pub Carvery Night, Tuesday; Tempura Night, Wednesday; Italian Night, Thursday; Island Treasure Night, Friday; and All American Night, Saturday. Call (02) 8451888/ (045) 5998000.

HYATT Hotel and Casino Manila's Li Li Cantonese Restaurant introduces lunch offerings. Business Lunch includes dim sum, meat, chicken or seafood dish, vegetable dish, rice or noodles and dessert. Yum Cha favorites are leafy greens, fried noodles and congees. Call 2451234.

THE BELLEVUE Hotel brings out the flaming grills every Friday and Saturday, 6-10 p.m., for the Poolside Barbecue Buffet. Seafood Savor offers seafood dishes at Cafe d'Asie. Oysters-on-the-go is ongoing until April 30. Call 7718181.

EDSA Shangri-La Manila introduces the best of Eastern fare presented with contemporary Western flair at Summer Palace until April 30. Dishes include Pumpkin Soup with Red Beans, Shark's Fin with Grilled Rib-eye Steak and Broccoli, Lapu-Lapu steamed with Ginger and Honey and Prawn Salad with Avocado and Lemon Mayonnaise. Meanwhile, Paparazzi offers new Italian creations in its daily lunch buffet and dinner. Call 6338888.

HEAVEN N' Eggs serves breakfast dishes, pancakes, waffles, soups and salads, sandwiches, pastas and meat and seafood entrees. The restaurant also offers bottomless coffee and iced tea. Heaven N' Eggs is located at CKB Building, Tomas Morato, QC. Call 3762674.

THE FORMER Good Earth restaurant has reopened at the Republic of Malate on Mabini Street, Malate. Now called Good Earth Oriental Cuisine and Bar, it is bigger and no longer just a restaurant. Serving Oriental food during the day, Good Earth becomes a watering hole after 10 p.m., featuring a wide selection of lounge music, courtesy of a featured DJ. The new Good Earth Oriental Cuisine and Bar offers old favorites like Lily on the Pond, Beef with Oyster Sauce, Steamed Prawns in Garlic, Popoy's Delight (Steamed Fish Fillet with Ham) and Shanghai Chili Crab, as well as new appetizers and dishes like Flaming Chicken, Chestnut Delight and Tunaquitos, the seafood version of the popular Duckquitos prepared by chef Henry Cheung.

The new Good Earth Oriental Cuisine and Bar is at 1769 A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila. Its first branch is at The Fort, Taguig City. Call 3038729 (Malate) and 8877500 (The Fort).

ISTANA Bali Beach Bar and Restaurant introduces a new line of super saver meals consisting of a main dish with rice, plus dessert and a drink, for only P99.

The super saver meals are available for lunch on Saturdays and Sundays. They include Fish and Tofu in Black Bean Sauce, Sweet and Sour Pork, Beef with Broccoli in Oyster Sauce, Cajun Pork Chop with Buttered Vegetables; Lechon Kawali with Salted Egg, Tomato and Achara; and Hickory Spareribs with Vegetables, Indonesian Chicken Barbeque with Kropuk. They all come with a free glass of iced tea. Istana Bali also offers a line of healthy drinks, specifically diet slush drinks and diet milkshakes. The fruit-flavored diet slush drinks are available in orange, lychee, mango, grape and strawberry. The diet milkshakes has only two flavors at the moment, chocolate and strawberry. Istana Bali also has a Pan-Asian menu featuring a fusion of different Asian cuisines. Istana Bali Beach Bar is at 150 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City. Call 6329890.

AT NICKELODEON'S Bikini Bottom Blow Out, kids had their faces painted with SpongeBob SquarePants characters.

SpongeBob SquarePants fans get a treat

HUNDREDS of SpongeBob SquarePants fans attended Nickelodeon's Bikini Bottom Blow Out with Jollibee treating kids to an afternoon of glamour and style.

Some kids had their hair styled and adorned with funky and colorful accessories at the parlor. Others had their favorite SpongeBob SquarePants characters painted on their faces.

Jollibee, with Hetty and Twirlie, greeted guests at the Jollibee booth.

JOLLIBEE with program host

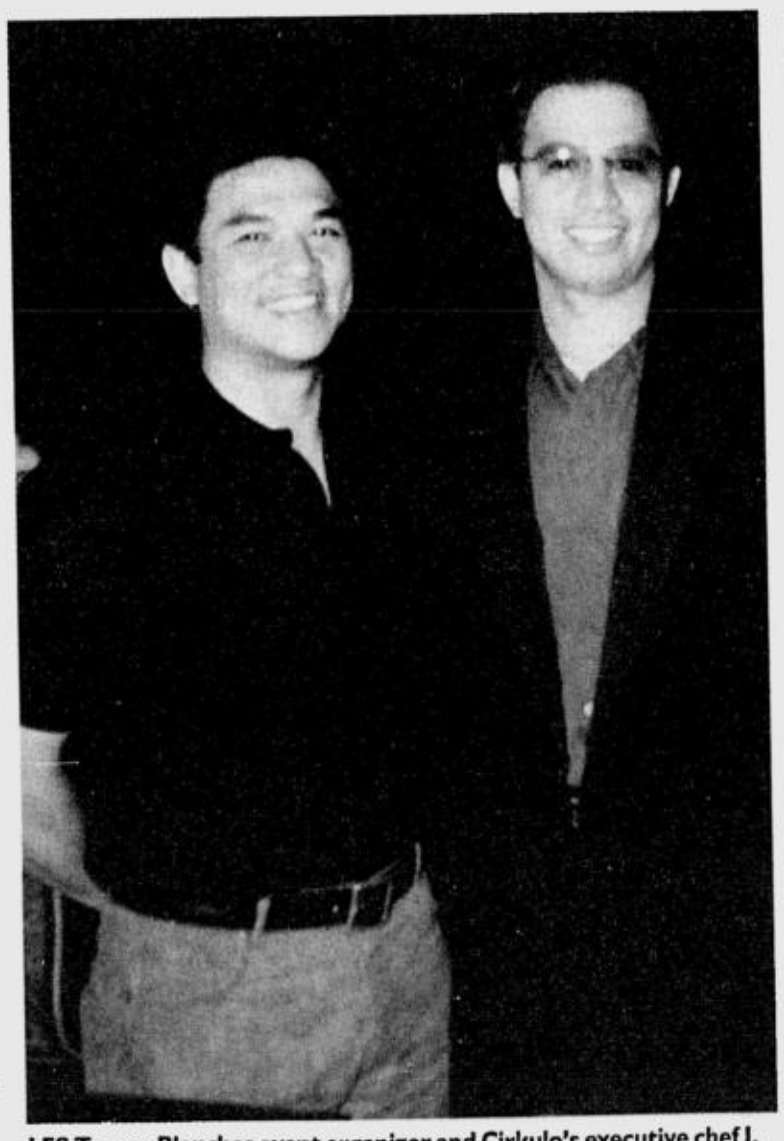
SPONGEBOB SquarePants shampoo dispenser

Among the highlights of the fun-filled afternoon was Jollibee's Krabby Patty-making game. The boys beat the girls with a four-second margin in the competition for the first to make a giant Krabby Patty. But all participants went home with bags of Jollibee and SpongeBob SquarePants goodies.

Jollibee, Hetty and Twirlie performed a dance number.

Before the premiere of the much-awaited "SpongeBob SquarePants the Movie," Jollibee gave out exciting prizes to 10 lucky moviegoers who found stickers under their seats.

The SpongeBob SquarePants craze was held at all Jollibee branches. SpongeBob SquarePants Bath Buddies were offered with Jollibee Kids Meal. They include SpongeBob SquarePants shampoo dispenser, Patrick Starfish conditioner dispenser and the Goofy Goober Toothbrush holder.



LES Toques Blanches event organizer and Cirkulo's executive chef J. Gamboa, with Disney World chef Jowell Reyes

SANTI'S Werner Berger (right) is warmly welcomed by M café owner Annabel Wisniewski.

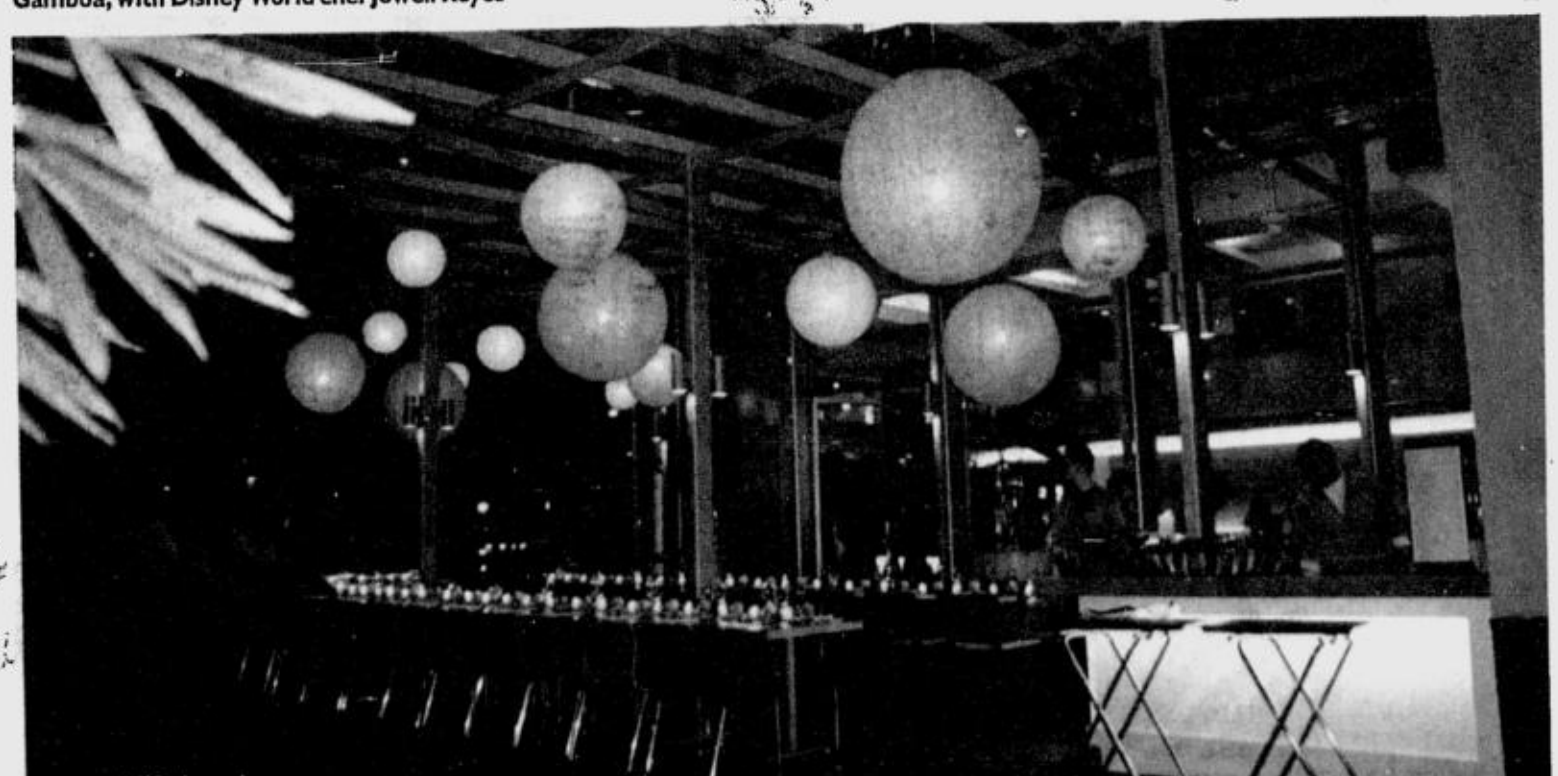
Dinner at the Chefs . . .

From page E1

group that included Cito Sen of Pazzo; Restaurant 9501's Myrna Segismundo; Disney World's chef Jowell Reyes; Philippine Airlines' executive chef Ian Mckenzie; Rolando and Jackie Laudico of Chef Laudico's; and specialty and executive chefs Roy Ng and Willie Riesen of Macro Asia Eurest.

Other guests were Les Toques Blanches president and Werdenberg International general manager, Othmar Frei; Uva and Embassy's executive chef Fernando Aracama; Santi's Werner Berger; Via Mare's Glenda Barretto; executive chef Rick Abasta of Discovery Suites; and David Pardo de Ayala, corporate chef of the Discovery hotel group.

M, with an indoor seating capacity of 100 and an outdoor café of 40 seats, is open from 6:30 a.m.-12 mn. It serves modern Asian dishes, including innovative Filipino items.



M'S charming Outdoor Cafe setup

■ Sports / A25
Pacquiao files case vs promoter Murad Muhammad in Las Vegas

■ News / A2
Joker: GMA pitting Senate vs House over VAT rate

■ Entertainment / A2-1
Cesar Montano's 'Panaghoy sa Suba' gets 11 Gawad Urian nominations

■ Metro / A23
Promise of jobs abroad lures 17 girls to sex den

■ Lifestyle / F1
Boracay for parents: Know what your kids are up to on this pleasure isle

Controversial US diplomat named envoy to Cambodia

By Volt Contreras

IT'S GOODBYE to the American diplomat who recently caused a diplomatic storm for comparing Mindandao's trouble spots to a potential "Afghanistan situation" and a "Mecca for terrorism."

US President George W. Bush has nominat-

CONTROVERSIAL/ A19

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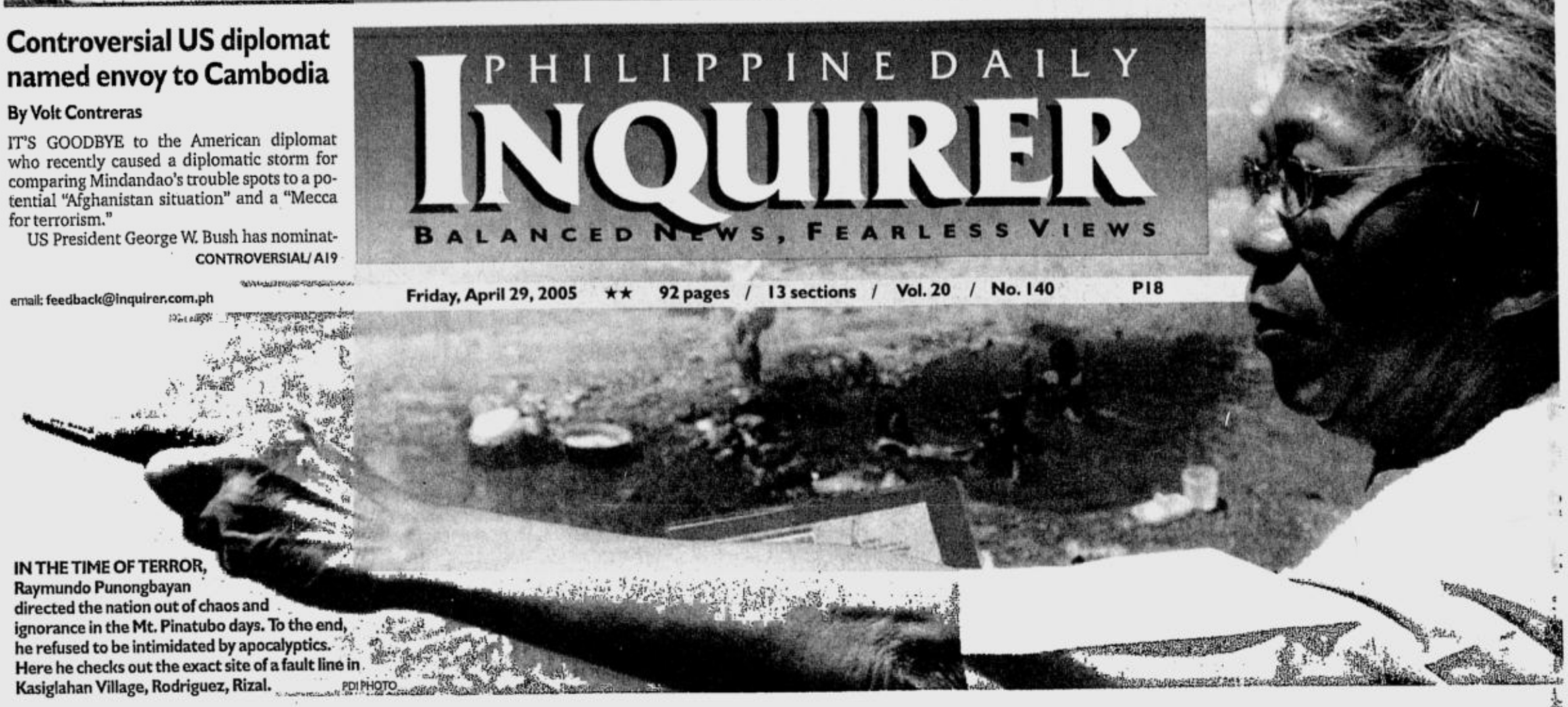


IN THE TIME OF TERROR, Raymundo Punongbayan directed the nation out of chaos and ignorance in the Mt. Pinatubo days. To the end, he refused to be intimidated by apocalyptics. Here he checks out the exact site of a fault line in Kasiglahan Village, Rodriguez, Rizal. PDI PHOTO

Punongbayan killed

Doña Aurora now enshrined with Quezon

FOR NEARLY 30 years, President Manuel L. Quezon lay alone inside the crypt at the shrine named in his honor. Yesterday, he was reunited with his beloved wife Doña Aurora Aragon-Quezon.

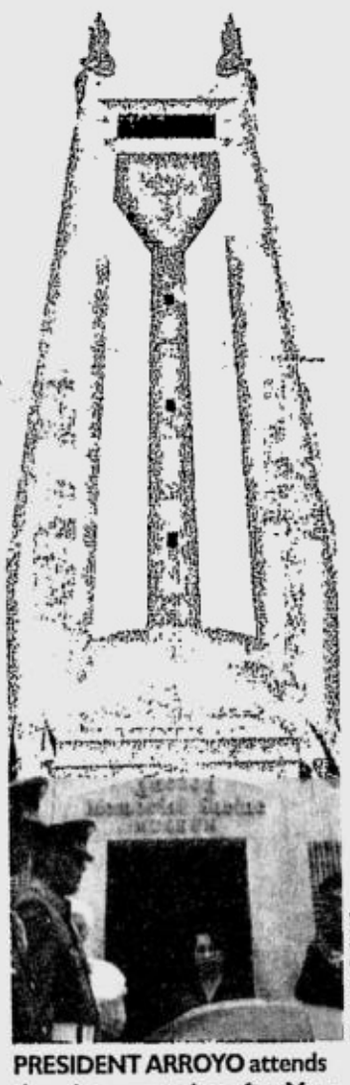
They have found their peace at last, their grandchildren said.

On Doña Aurora's 56th death anniversary, the first President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines was joined by his wife at the Quezon Memorial Shrine in the city he founded.

President Macapagal-Arroyo attended the formal turnover

DOÑA/ A21

"AN EMOTIONAL MOMENT," Nini Q. Avanceña with her son Ricky describes the reunion of her parents President Quezon and Mrs. Aurora Quezon at the Quezon City Memorial Shrine onThursday.



EDWIN BACASMAS

PRESIDENT ARROYO attends the reinterment rites after Mass at the Sto. Domingo Church.

8 also die in aerial mission to save lives

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Blanche S. Rivera and Juliet Labog-Javellana

IT TURNED out to be his last mission to save lives.

Philippine National Red Cross governor Raymundo Punongbayan and eight other persons were on their way back in a helicopter from an aerial assessment of a renewed potential danger of landslides in Dingalan, Aurora, when their time ran out.

The Philippine Air Force Huey UH-1H chopper with tail number Stringer 324 crashed into Mt. Namat in Barangay Ligaya, Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, instantly killing all those on board—Punongbayan, four scientists and staff of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, which he headed until 2003, two PAF pilots and two soldiers.

It was Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the PNRC, who had arranged with Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. for the use of the chopper. But by a twist of fate, Gordon did not make it to the chopper's 6:58 a.m. departure from Villamor Air Base.

The Huey stopped to refuel at Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija, and took off for Dingalan at around 8:41 a.m. The crash was reported to the PAF at 10:14 a.m.

Gordon heard the grim news

PUNONGBAYAN/ A22

He was Inquirer's first Filipino of the Year

Editor's Note: Raymundo Punongbayan held the distinction of being the INQUIRER's first Filipino of the Year. This report, published on Jan. 1, 1992, explains why he was deemed the man who made the most positive impact on a grateful nation in 1991.

"THE HEAVENS fell" is an apt description of what people saw in the sky when Mount Pinatubo erupted. That media event rearranged the course of history and the meaning of life in the minds of statesmen and politicians, the moralists and the superstitious, poets and scientists, businessmen and believers, and the man in the street.

One person who refused to be intimidated by such apocalyptics was Raymundo S. Punongbayan, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

With his calm voice and warm paternal face wearing a twitch of a smile, he virtually

HE WAS/ A22

Solons, coco groups rue 'brave' Yorac exit

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

LAWMAKERS yesterday lamented Haydee Yorac's resignation as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, saying she was one of the few good people in the government.

Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who both initiated the Senate inquiry into the use of the coconut levy funds for a coconut plantation project in Agusan del Sur, said Yorac was "a loss" to public service.

"We lost a good person in the resignation of Yorac from the PCGG," Pimentel said, adding that she had fought vigorously to

SOLONS/ A19

BIR goes after 'jueteng' lords

By Armand N. Nocum

THEY SURVIVED raids, arrests and congressional grilling. But can jueteng lords survive the taxman who plans to use the approach adopted by US federal agents to bring down American gangster Al Capone.

Failing to pin Capone for murder and bootlegging, the US government succeeded in arresting and convicting him for tax evasion.

Officials conducting the Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) campaign have started looking into the assets of jueteng operators who lord it over a P30-billion-a-year industry.

Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said the agency had enlisted the help of Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, an anti-jueteng crusader, in the campaign.

"We are now developing tax evasion cases against them. We are checking their properties. We

BIR GOES/ A8

Forest czar quits, too

By Fe Zamora

RETIRED Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus yesterday resigned as alternate ex-officio chair of the National Resources Development Corp., the second ranking government official to quit his post in three days.

"Yes, that is confirmed. I tendered my resignation yesterday (Wednesday) and it was accepted today," Corpus told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

One of the country's most controversial military officers, Corpus joined the New People's Army in 1970 and was reinstated into the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in 1986.

He retired as AFP chief of Civil

FOREST/ A8

Nene wants Lito out: He's from 'Vatican of jueteng'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AS A NATIVE of Pampanga, considered the country's center of "jueteng" operations, Sen. Lito Lapid should excuse himself from the Senate inquiry into the latest jueteng controversy, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said yesterday.

"I told him maybe it is best that he inhibit himself because he comes from the province, which is the 'Vatican of jueteng,'" Pimentel said.

Lapid chairs the Senate

NENE/ A8

10,000 bulbs light up Ho's Jumbo resto

By Fe Zamora

FROM the outside, it is already a sight to behold, a floating Chinese pagoda lit up by 10,000 light bulbs.

Inside, the Jumbo Kingdom simply dazzles.

A 50-ft wide mural depicting fairies floating heavenward sets the tone. The art work, painted 20 years ago when the boat was first built, is breathtaking in its scope. You can hardly miss it as it spans the walls facing the wide staircase.

You make a turn and you come

10,000/ A21

THE SUSPICION is that the "fabulous" floating pagoda on Manila Bay behind the Folk Arts Theater at the CCP complex in Pasay City is a casino ill-disguised as a resto named Jumbo Kingdom. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds blowing from the east and southeast will prevail throughout the archipelago.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/04/29/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Poverty is why kids drop out of school

By Alcuin Papa

POVERTY is still the No. 1 reason why Filipino children drop out of school, according to a civil society network involved in education reform.

Some 11 million school children between the ages of six and 15 years drop out of school because of low family income, said the Education Network, or E-Net, also known as the Civil Society Network for Education Reforms.

Another factor in the high drop-out rate is simply a lack of interest in getting an education, said E-Net in a presentation it gave yesterday at the education department.

Many of the children who drop out of school end up working in farms or helping with household chores, said E-Net, which groups some 130 Philippine-based civil society and non-government organizations committed to expanding and strengthening civil society participation in reforming the country's education system.

E-net president Flora Arellano said their research, conducted since 2004, showed that most children in far-flung areas choose to help their parents in working their farms and tending their crops for the family's sustenance.

No choice

"Most of the children do not have a choice but to help their families in the fields for food. Because of this, children do not have the time to go to school," she said.

E-Net said that of the six out of 10 children who graduate from the elementary level, only half would go on to finish high school.

Males are more likely to drop out than females whose school survival rate remains high, the research showed.

High-school dropouts are usually from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the Visayas region and the provinces of Bulacan and Davao.

E-Net, which works in partnership with government, has come up with programs to help youngsters remain in school, said Arellano.

One of these is the use of alternative modes of teaching, such as allowing children and out-of-school youth to learn their lessons by listening to the radio.

Teachers on wheels

Another is the "teachers-on-wheels" program where teachers are regularly brought to isolated areas to teach students who are outside the school system.

With these alternative programs, children can study without having to leave their barrio or commute and walk long distances, said Arellano.

E-Net also works to place children in regular schools and keep them there, she said.

"We hope that with the appropriate tools, we can achieve this," she said.

But Arellano said E-Net has had a hard time carrying out its programs because it lacks the necessary funds.

She said she hoped to get the government to help fund E-net's programs.

Some of the civil society and non-government organizations making up E-Net are the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, Education for Life Foundation, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, WomanHealth Phil., Voluntary Service Overseas Phil., Oxfam, Trainors Collective and Popular Education for People's Empowerment, among others.

DIVIDE AND RULE ON VAT

GMA pitting House vs Senate, says Joker

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

ADMINISTRATION Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of pitting the Senate and the House against each other in order to get the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT) rate she favors passed.

"The impasse on the VAT rate is not unsolvable, unless Malacañang is abetting the disagreement so that it can get what it wants—the 12-percent VAT," Arroyo said.

The senator said the President apparently was choosing economic stability over political stability.

"The government now is being charged with so many unmentionable crimes one after the other," Arroyo said, citing the jueteng scandal and the resignation of Presidential Commission on Good Government chair Haydee Yorac allegedly because of pressure from Malacañang.

"If we load this tax imposition amounting to P150 billion, that would exacerbate her (the President's) political problems," he said.

Arroyo said Malacañang was pressuring the senators to accept the 12-percent VAT rate.

"The senators are wracking their brains and working very hard to come up with a formula that would satisfy the President and the House," he said.

But he said that while the House approved the 12-percent VAT rate after considerable debate, in the Senate, the vote to retain the tax at 10 percent was unanimous.

"We can't just change it (Senate position) because if the (Senate bicam) panel agrees to anything less than what we agreed on (on the floor) unanimously, when the ratification stage comes, we have been warned there would be a protracted debate," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said it could happen that the Senate bicameral conference committee panel would agree to raise the VAT to 12 percent but this would not be approved by the Senate in plenary session.

A senator, who did not want to be named, said the President gave Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan a dressing-down when he came to tell her what happened in the caucus of the Senate bicam panel on Tuesday.

"He was not even able to talk," the senator said, adding that the President immediately tore into Pangilinan about the "slow pace" of the Senate action on the tax measure.

At the House yesterday, members cautioned Malacañang against forging a modus vivendi [unsettled alliance] with the Senate over the latter's proposal to give President Arroyo "standby authority" to increase the VAT rate to 12 percent.

In a rare gesture of unity, leaders of the majority, minority and party-list blocs in the lower chamber joined hands in opposing the grant of "taxing powers" to Ms Arroyo.

"It's an undue delegation of the taxing power of Congress," said Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, stressing that any taxes should emanate from the legislative branch.

Nograles said that yielding to the proposal in an effort to break the deadlock on the VAT rate "might only spell trouble for President Arroyo's bid to raise badly needed revenues if it should turn out that this standby power was legally and constitutionally flawed."

Rep. Herminio Teves, House ways and means committee vice chair, said, "Now is the opportune time to set aside our respective pride and vested interests to save our sagging economy."

Nograles and Teves supported House Minority Leader Francis Escudero's position enunciated on Wednesday that the call of Sen. Ralph Recto to grant President Arroyo standby authority was "uncalled for."

Land reform chief wants PCGG remittances audited

By Blanche S. Rivera

SQUEEZED into a corner by lack of wherewithal, the Department of Land Reform is now digging into its records to make sure that the Presidential Commission on Good Government had been remitting the right amount to the agency.

Land Reform Secretary Villa parried questions about possible wrongdoing after ordering finance officials of the department to check the office's record of remittances from the PCGG to fund the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

"We assume in good faith that they're giving us the right amount. Maybe we should be proactive instead of waiting for them to just give us the money," he said.

Villa stressed that he was not accusing the PCGG of cheating on the remittances for CARP.

"I'm not saying that they have taken some of the money, but their interpretation of the law on what should go to us may be different," Villa said.

The review came as the DLR searches for funds to acquire the remaining 780,000 hectares of land covered by the CARP it still has to buy.

The DLR needs P39 billion for land acquisition and distribution until 2008 when the program expires.

It was during the term of Haydee Yorac, who tendered her resignation Monday as chair of the PCGG effective at the end of the month, that the DLR received the biggest share of the Marcos ill-gotten wealth for the CARP, amounting to some P35 billion.

Before that, the CARP fund received only around P8 billion a year from the PCGG. The DLR has P17 billion for land acquisition this year.

"People come and go in government, nobody is indispensable," Villa said of Yorac. "But responsible as she is, I'm sure she left everything in order."

Villa said he was optimistic that the DLR's "very healthy" relationship with the PCGG would continue under the administration of newly appointed chair Camilo Sabio.

Santiago denies P8M rap; Abu OKs filing of complaint

By Dona Pazzibugan and Nelson F. Flores

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Efren Abu has approved the filing of a graft complaint against former chief of staff, retired Gen. Dionisio Santiago, with the Office of the Ombudsman in connection with allegations that he pocketed P8 million intended for the repair of a swimming pool in Camp Aguinaldo.

A report by the AFP Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability said Santiago "defrauded the government" when he deposited a check worth P8 million into his personal account two months after he retired.

Santiago held the post from Nov. 28, 2002 to April 3, 2003.

"As far as OESPA matters are concerned, my job is ministerial," Abu said yesterday when asked about his action on the recommendation. "I have full trust and confidence" in Vice Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Ariston Delos Reyes, the concurrent chief of the office that investigated the retired general.

But Santiago, now executive director of the Dangerous Drugs Board, yesterday denied that he took the money, saying his "conscience is clear."

According to Santiago, he did not benefit from any transaction during his four-month stint as chief of staff. He added that he may have "fast-tracked" some contracts to ensure their early completion but did not take a single centavo.

"All I want is for the projects to be finished the soonest possible time for the benefit of my men," said Santiago, a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy in 1970. He added that "he will face the charges anywhere, anytime."

Records showed that the AFP Commissioned Officers Country issued a check to Santiago on March 4, 2003 for the swimming pool's renovation. Santiago, however, kept the check and paid the contractor himself.

On June 2, 2003, nearly two months after he retired, Santiago deposited the check into his account at the Centennial Bank Central Office. He only returned that check to AFP-COC last February when an investigation got underway.

In a letter last Feb. 24 to the AFPOESPA chief, Santiago insisted that there was nothing irregular in the improvements made in the swimming pool. But he admitted that "it was a mistake to hold on to the money" and to pay the contractor himself.

However, the AFPOESPA said Santiago was still liable for graft even if the former chief of staff returned the check. With a report from Emman Cena, trainee

Asistio, pal ask Sandigan to allow regular visits to Erap

CALOOCAN City Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio and a businesswoman-friend yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to allow them to regularly visit deposed President Joseph Estrada at his Tanay, Rizal, estate where he is detained on plunder charges.

In a three-page motion, Asistio and Mariles Cacho-Romulo said they were "close personal friends of Estrada's since the '50s."

"This motion is not intended to solicit a special privilege or consideration from this honorable court but is merely prompted by reasonable and justifiable circumstances," said Asistio through his lawyer Hilario Magsino.

Asistio, one of the witnesses for Estrada in the latter's ongoing plunder trial, said he had been informed by the policemen guarding the former president that all visitors must now secure the antigraft court's permission before being allowed to see him.

Asistio said he had been a regular visitor of Estrada since the time he was detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

Magsino said records will show that no untoward incidents or breaches of security had occurred during any of Asistio's previous visits.

Preparations are underway, meanwhile, for the 100th birthday celebration of Estrada's mother, Doña Mary Ejercito, at the Manila Hotel.

Estrada's lawyer Jose Flaminiano said that if allowed to attend, Estrada would follow the security procedures prescribed by the Philippine National Police. *Nelson F. Flores*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chinese leader ends state visit

By Mike Lim Ubac

CHINESE President Hu Jintao yesterday left for China after a three-day state visit aimed at boosting trade and security relations.

Before leaving the Philippines, Hu met with the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Manila Hotel and laid a wreath on the tomb of Jose Rizal in Luneta Park. He then boarded a special Air China plane to Beijing.

Hu on Wednesday met with President Macapagal-Arroyo and pledged to boost trade relations with the Philippines and the other nine members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The two leaders also witnessed the signing of investment and loan agreements worth $1.6 billion to finance infrastructure and mining projects here.

Hu, whose visit marked the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the Philippines 30 years ago, also addressed the joint session of Congress the other day where he called on Beijing and Manila to strengthen cooperation and create a better future for the region.

But China's increased presence in the country meant both good news and bad news for militant lawmakers.

Reps. Liza Maza (Gabriela Women's Party), Teodoro Casiño and Satur Ocampo (Bayan Muna) lauded what they called a "welcome development" between the two countries.

HU

Casiño also expressed hope that Hu's visit would help make the Philippine foreign policy truly independent from Washington, especially in the US-led war on terror.

But Reps. Mario Aguja and Risa Hontiveros (Akbayan), Joel Virador (Bayan Muna) and Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis) were skeptic over what they called a "one-sided" ties in China's favor.

They cited "onerous and one-sided" arrangements in the North Railway rehabilitation contract with China priced at $421.5 million.

Mariano noted that Article 3.2 on the North Railway contract banned the government from canceling the contract without China's consent.

Virador also noted that at least 127,580 families in Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Metro Manila would be displaced from the project. *With reports from AFP and Dano Angelo Tingcungco, trainee*

War haunts Hu

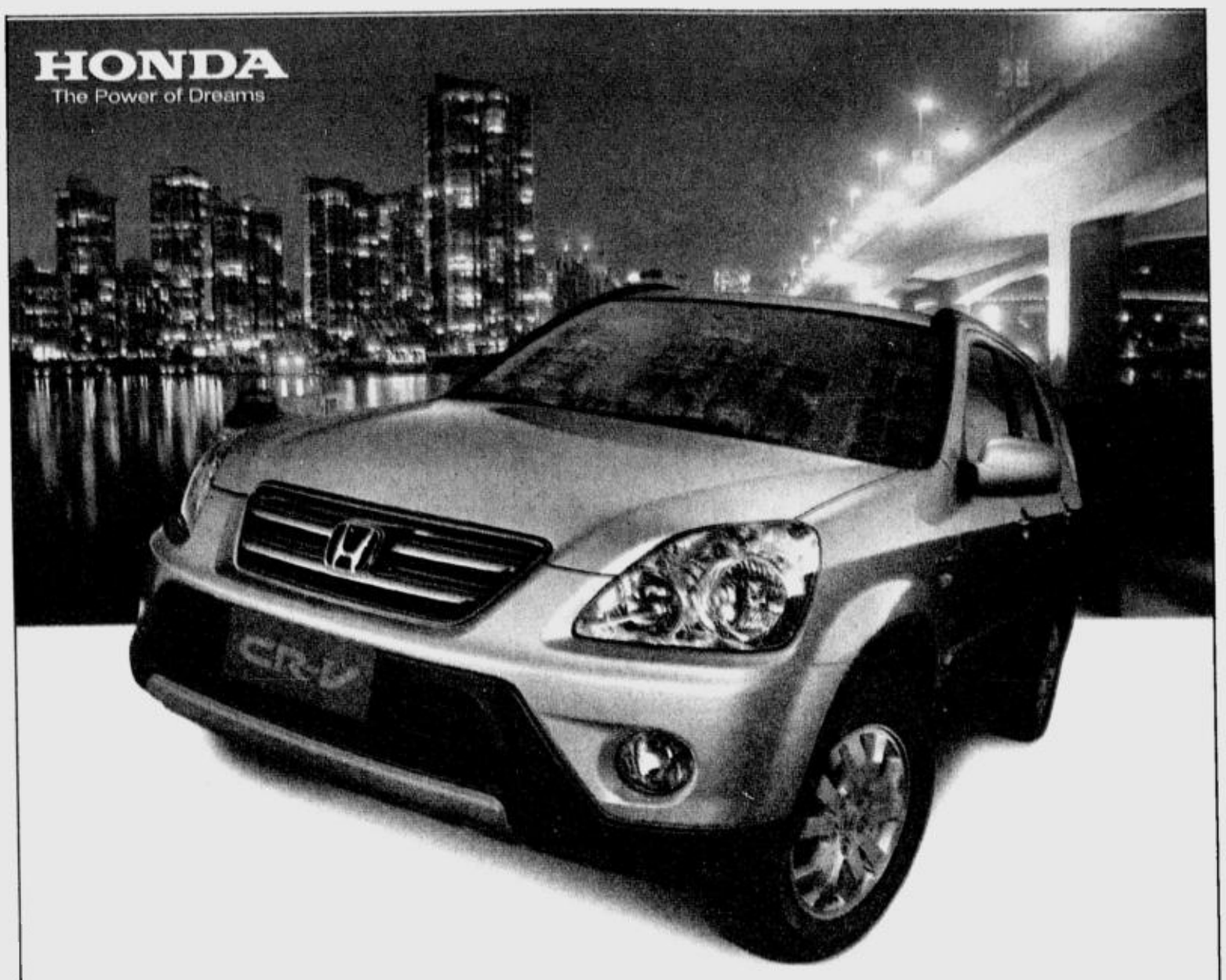
IT'S NOT exactly in his itinerary, but visiting Chinese President Hu Jintao spent his last few hours in Manila being reminded of Japanese atrocities during World War II—an issue that recently sparked a searing diplomatic row between Beijing and Tokyo.

On the third and final day of his state visit, the Chinese leader took an early morning tour of Fort Santiago and a nearby Filipino-Chinese museum in historic Intramuros, Manila, with WWII memories cropping up during his brief stopovers.

At one point during the museum tour, Hu spent a longer time viewing memorabilia about Tsinoy guerrilla fighters and even surprised his hosts by recalling a particular bloodbath involving the Chinese and the Japanese in Manila.

"He himself reminded us that the Chinese consul general at the time and his 11 staff members were rounded up and executed by the Japanese in defiance of diplomatic convention," said *tsinoy* community leader Teresita Ang See, who showed Hu around.

Hu brought up the incident while marveling at a piece of old furniture—a desk with a "secret drawer" used by the tsinoys to hide their guns—and after being told of how the ethic Chinese fought alongside Filipinos in Philippine history's "darkest hour," Ang See told the INQUIRER after the tour. *Volt Contreras*



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Noli sees Chile president, gets ideas on housing

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE President Noli de Castro and Chilean President Ricardo Lagos Escobar yesterday agreed to improve their countries' socialized housing programs using the successful Chilean model as a starting point.

De Castro held separate meetings with Lagos, Vice President and Minister of Interior Jose Miguel Unsilza, and Minister of Housing and Urbanization Sonia Tschorne Berestsky on his first official visit to Chile.

The vice president flew to Chile from the Vatican where he led the Philippine delegation in the first Mass officiated by Pope Benedict XVI.

De Castro and the Chilean leader talked about the two country's bilateral relations, socialized housing programs, trade and investment, and counter-terrorism.

He informed Lagos of President Macapagal-Arroyo's housing program which was to provide socialized housing units for the bottom 30 percent of the population.

From 2005 to 2010, De Castro said, the Arroyo administration would put up 1.1 million housing units for the people, 68 percent of which would be allocated for socialized housing.

"In particular, President Macapagal-Arroyo is very keen on learning more about the 'Sociales Viviendas' program of Chile, which has proven to be very effective in reducing the housing deficit in the country," De Castro said.

De Castro also conveyed the President's keen interest in expanding trade between the two countries.

In 2003, Chile ranked as the Philippines' 44th global trading partner, and 4th in the Latin American region. Trade has always been in favor of Chile due to the high importation of copper concentrates.

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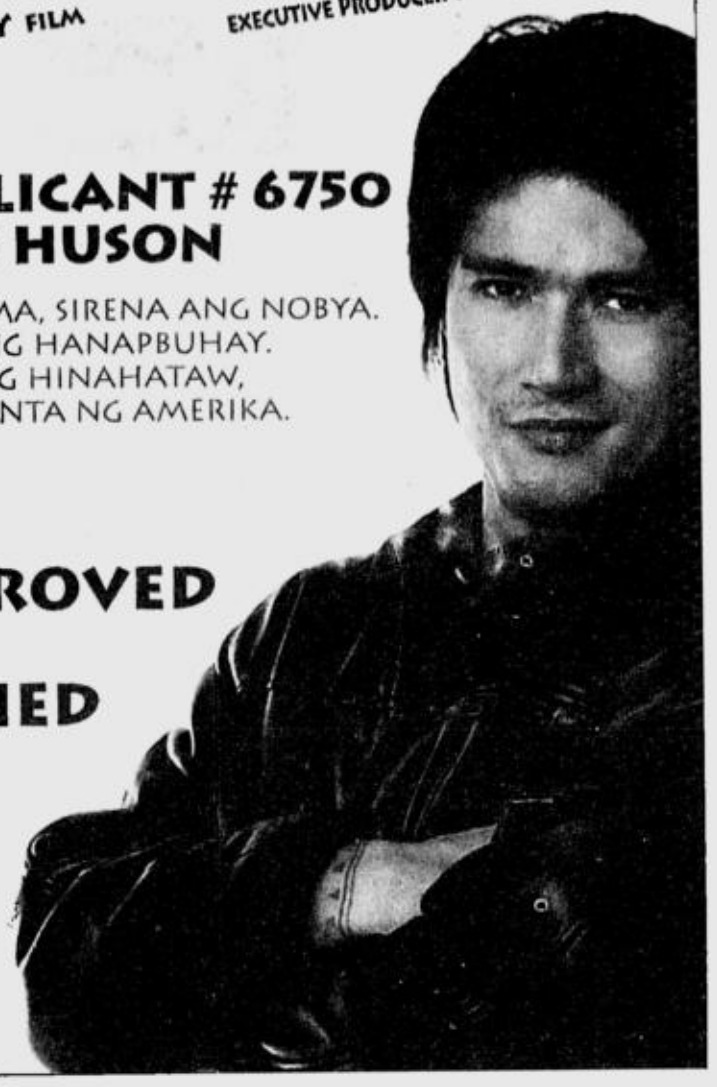

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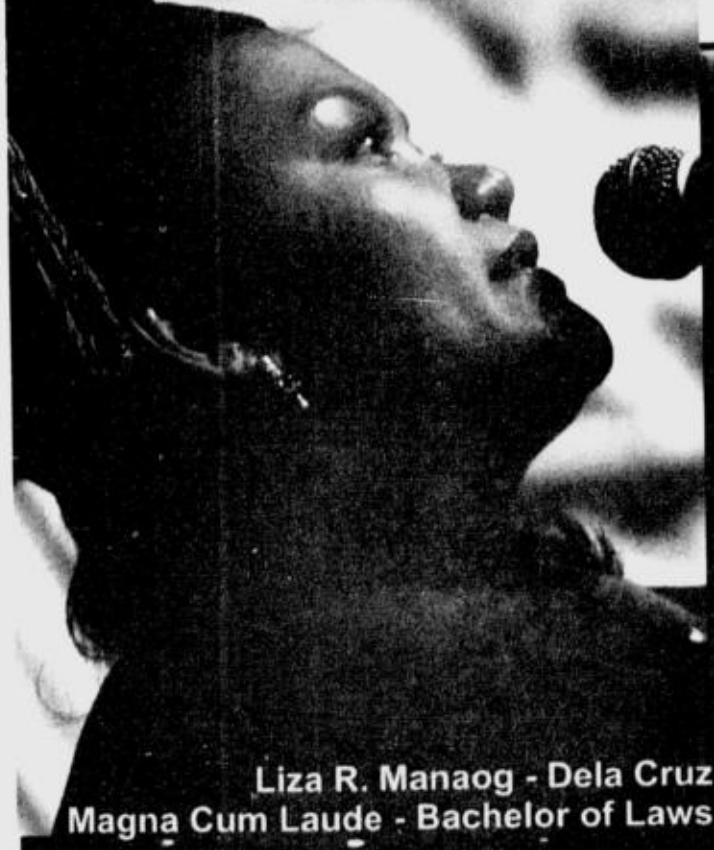

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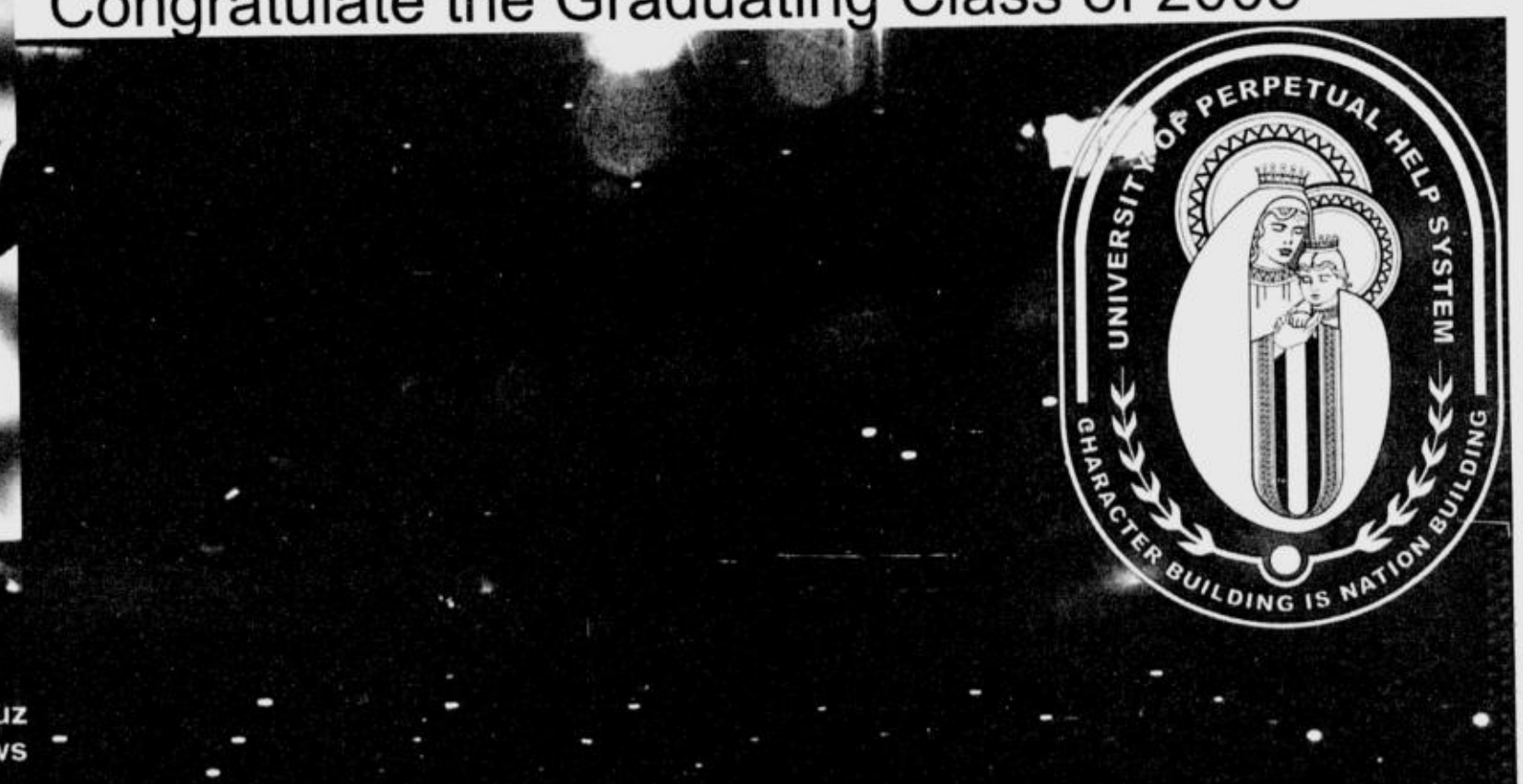

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House bill seeks sanctions vs erring pre-need firms

THE HOUSE committee on banks yesterday passed a measure seeking a maximum of 14 years imprisonment for officials of troubled pre-need companies.

If enacted, House Bill No. 119, scheduled for plenary deliberations early next week, would be the country's first pre-need plan code.

In an executive committee meeting yesterday, committee chair Rep. Jaime Lopez also approved a maximum fine of P5 million for pre-need companies that would be found guilty of not paying their obligations to planholders.

Lopez said the bill sought to provide "protection for planholders" and "financial assistance to pre-need companies."

HB 119, which consolidated five bills, also requires all pre-need companies, among other things, to deposit monthly at least 45 percent (for life plans) and 51 percent (for education plans) of their earnings in a "benefit fund."

This "fund" would then solely be used to bankroll obligations to planholders, according to the consolidated measure.

The committee's approval of HB 119 came amid disputes between officials and planholders of Pacific Education Plans.

The troubled pre-need company had earlier filed for suspension of payments and rehabilitation before a Makati trial court, saying it could no longer fund future claims since tuition rates escalated in 1990.

"Given the recent events with (Pacific Plans and College Assurance Plan), we need harsher penalties to protect planholders from pre-need companies," said committee member, Rep. Eulogio Magsaysay (Alliance of Volunteer Educators party-list). *Dano Angelo Tingcungco*

Failed con game raises questions on gov't deals

By Luige A. del Puerto

IS THIS how you get a national politician to fund a local project?

A businessman lost P190,000 to a con artist who had posed as a "staff for Mindanao" of Senators Lito Lapid and Ramon "Bong" Revilla, police said.

The businessman and a Mindanao town vice mayor thought they could get Lapid to fund a farm-to-market road in the local executive's municipality. So three weeks ago, they gave the con man cash to facilitate the release of funds for the project, the police said.

Yesterday, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group presented Rolly Ty, the alleged con man. He was arrested in the act of receiving P3,000 from businessman Virgilio Pongase, according to Senior Supt. Pete Tango, acting CIDG deputy director.

Tango said Ty had been involved in Lapid's election campaign. But while he had long ceased to work for the senator, he had apparently been dropping Lapid's name.

Pongase, a Cebu-based contractor, and Vice Mayor Allan Lim of Lala, Lanao del Norte, had negotiated with Ty for the supposed road project.

Ty had also promised to help Pongase get a lotto franchise in exchange for some cash.

But none of the projects seemed to be materializing, and when Ty kept asking for more money, Pongase and Lim decided to contact the authorities.

On Wednesday, policemen arrested Ty in a fastfood restaurant in Marikina City.

Ty's arrest, however, may have raised more questions.

For instance, why was Pongase willing to part with his cash for a government project when such projects usually underwent a bidding process? Was he sure he would win the bid?

Also, how did a local official like Lim figure in an attempt to corner a government project by paying a senator's supposed staff member?

"I really wanted to bring the project to my town," Lim told reporters.

Pongase said the money was meant to "facilitate" the release of funds from the senator's office. Ty had told him he had a friend in the budget department and he would need around P60,000 to work on the fund's release, the businessman said.

Later, he gave Ty another P130,000, Pongase said.

"It was not bribery," Lim said. "He (Ty) was just there to facilitate. *Parang tatrabahuin nila ang* funding *namin*(They were going to work on getting the funding)."

"It was just for tickets, allowance, whatsoever," he added.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, April 29, 2005
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 15:22-31
Gospel: John 15:12-17

Jesus said to his disciples, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends; and you are my friends if you do what I command you.

"I shall not call you servants any more, because servants do not know what their master is about. Instead I have called you friends, since I have made known to you everything I learned from my Father.

"You did not choose me; it was I who chose you and sent you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. And everything you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.

"This is my command, that you love one another."

Commentary

The only commandment is the one that encompasses all the others—we are to love one another as Jesus has loved us! Incredible, impossible, demanding, freeing—but we are to love all others in this way, not picking and choosing who we will love and who we will ignore or harm. The greatest love is to give life, to lay down our lives, as Jesus did for all of us. And if we do this, as he showed us—in service, in washing one another's feet, in forgiveness and mercy, in non-violent resistance to evil, in speaking the truth, in care of the outcast and the shunned, in seeking out the lost and bringing hope to all, then we will be called friends—the friends of God. We will no longer be servants, because we will know God the Father in the ways that Jesus has learned and taught us. Do we love? Do we love our enemies? Do we lay down our lives daily in service to those most in dire need? Do we make peace? Do we wash feet? Are we practicing loving as Jesus has loved us, in the Spirit given to us in baptism?

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Cops intercept 2 tankers for theft of Petron jet fuel

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE MARITIME group of the Philippine National Police yesterday intercepted two tankers and arrested 27 crew members, including their two skippers, for the alleged sale of P20 million worth of jet foil belonging to the state-owned Petron.

Police said one tanker was pumping the jet fuel to the other when they were apprehended.

The tankers were identified as the M/T Margarita, owned by the Shogun Ship Inc., and the M/T Lolita, owned by the Lolita Co.

The two were intercepted by operatives of the Philippine National Police Maritime Group on Manila Bay at 4 a.m. yesterday while the Margarita was allegedly in the act of transferring jet fuel to the Lolita.

The Margarita was loaded with 1.2 million liters of jet A-1 fuel with a market value of P20 million. The fuel belongs to the Petron company and came from the Bataan Petron Refinery Company, police said.

Supt. Leonardo Suan, chief of the special operations unit of the maritime group, said in a report that the Margarita's captain and the crew members were selling the fuel for a low price to the Lolita without the knowledge or consent of Petron.

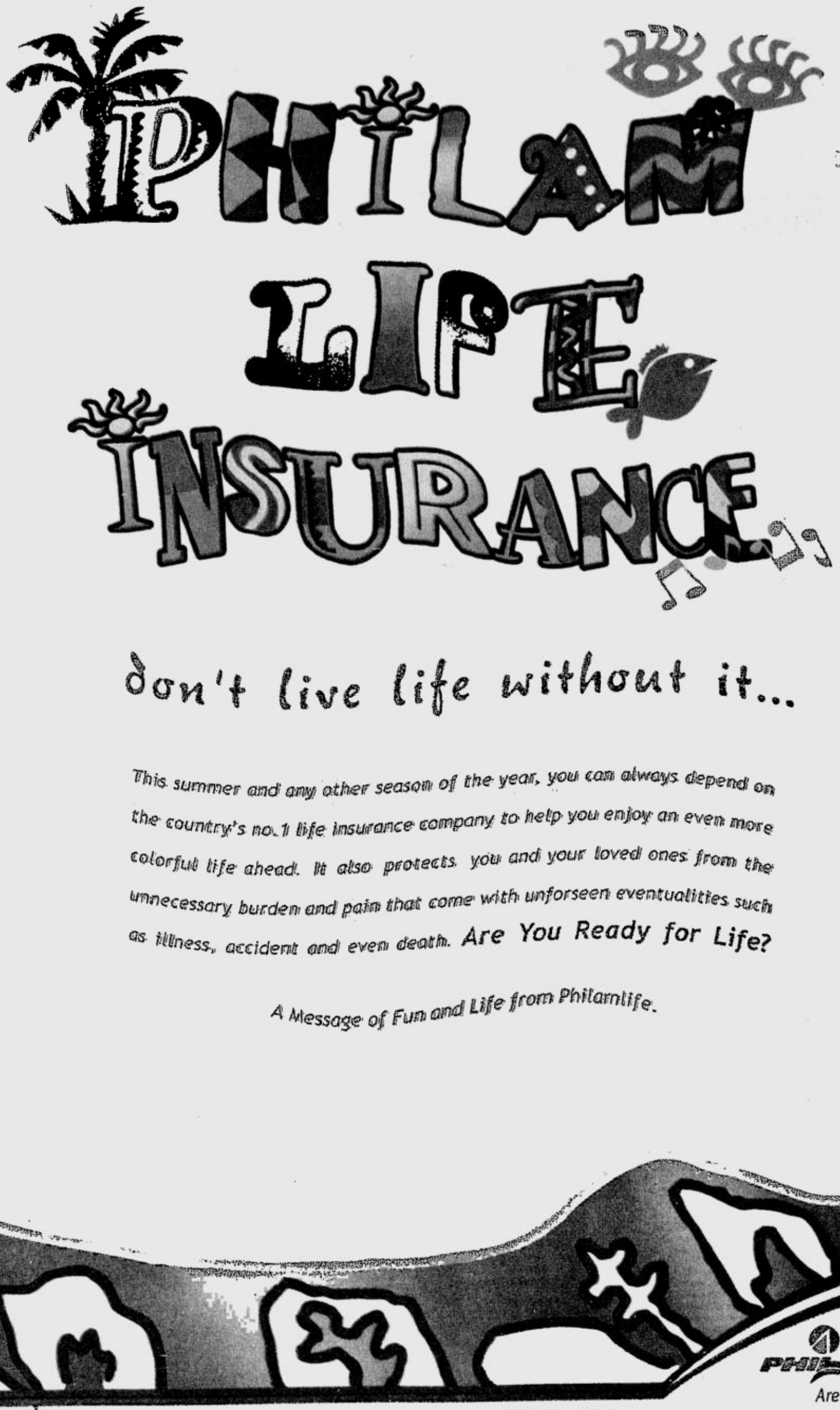
Seventeen persons from the Margarita, including its captain Dizon Abejo, were arrested. On the other hand, the police nabbed 10 people, including captain Cipriano Cabigas, from the Lolita.

Police also recovered P20,000 from the arrested people and a 9mm pistol from Orly Macaraig, one of the crew members of the Lolita.

Suan also said the operation against the two tankers was launched following a series of intelligence reports on the pilferage of fuel involving cargo vessels.

Recently, Petron accused several shipping companies of stealing fuel from the oil firm and filed a P277 million damage suit against them at the Manila regional trial court.

Petron said it had suffered "substantial financial losses" for the past five years from the shipping companies' alleged theft of the fuel that they hauled from the Bataan refinery to its storage facilities in Pandacan.



Nene wants Lito out: He's from 'Vatican of jueteng'

From page A1

committee on games and amusement, which is set to investigate reports that three close relatives of a top government official were raking in millions of pesos in jueteng payoffs every month.

The trio, known by their code names M1, M2 and JS7, also influence the assignment of police officials to provinces where the illegal numbers game is rampant, according to a police officer.

Possible link

The Senate wants to subpoena the police officer to unmask M1, M2 and JS7.

Pimentel said Lapid, a former governor of Pampanga, might even be linked by some people to the proliferation of jueteng in the province.

"But I also do not want anybody heading the committee who might have his or her own political agenda. I don't want politics to be injected into the committee hearing," the minority leader said.

President's close ally

Lapid is a close ally and "cabalen" (province-mate) of President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo were allegedly two of the jueteng beneficiaries.

Lapid and Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. were the two actors fielded by Ms Arroyo's K4 coalition in the 2004 elections.

Pimentel said he advised the neophyte senator that it was for his own good that he excuse himself from heading the inquiry. But Pimentel said Lapid could not be compelled to do so.

"I also told him that you need not take it from me, you can ask your colleagues. And I don't know what he did. We're still waiting," Pimentel said.

But Lapid said on dzBB radio that he "definitely" would not inhibit himself from the probe.

He reportedly said that his fellow senators also came from places where the illegal numbers game was in operation.

Rampant jueteng areas

Patronized by the poor, jueteng has reportedly become a P30-billion-a-year industry.

Besides Pampanga, the areas where jueteng remains allegedly rampant include Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija, Batangas, Quezon, Rizal, Bulacan and Laguna, according to the police official.

Allegations that ousted President Joseph Estrada received huge payoffs from jueteng lords led to his impeachment and eventual overthrow in 2001.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, who sought the inquiry, saw nothing wrong with Lapid chairing the committee.

Drilon's resolution was originally referred to the Senate committee on constitutional amendments chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon.

PIMENTEL: Unsolicited advice

LAPID: Definitely still in

PHILIPPINE SOCIETY OF CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION AND INTERVENTIONS, INC.

12th Annual Scientific Convention

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April 29 - 30, 2005 • Canyon Woods Resort Club, Laurel, Batangas

MESSAGES

Greetings!

Time passes by so quickly. It's almost a year since we have started preparing for this annual convention and now it's "just around the corner". The theme "Familiarity with Devices and Techniques in Transcatheter Therapy" has been chosen by the overall chairman of this year's convention, Dr. Reynaldo Fajardo. The topics were carefully selected to give us an up to date information regarding cardiac interventions. There had been some difficulty with regards to inviting speakers due to scheduled convention in other countries. But despite the odds, we have two foreign speakers - Dr. Philip Wong and Dr. Tan Kok Soon. The Canyon Woods located in Laurel Batangas has been selected among others to suit our needs as well as our friends and family members.

Let me take this opportunity to invite everyone to come and attend this year's convention for intellectual sharing and camaraderie. Also, let me thank the officers and members of the board most especially the organizing committee for their time and effort they have given for this convention. Lastly my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our pharmaceutical friends and sponsors for their support despite economic crisis.

I hope to see you in our convention.

EDUARDO P. MANRIQUE, M.D.
President
Philippine Society of Cardiac Catheterization and Interventions, Inc.

For the 2nd straight year, I have the privileged of inviting you to the Annual Scientific Symposium of the PSCCI on April 30, 2005. The theme of the 12th Scientific Symposium "Familiarity with Devices and Techniques in Transcatheter Therapy" reflects the commitment of the society to continuously improve our knowledge and skills in common procedures and devices utilized in the cardiac catheterization laboratory. The scientific committee has lined-up a learning curriculum which focuses not only on the interventional cardiologists but also on the paramedical personnel and medical practitioners interested in transcatheter therapy.

The keyword in this year's theme is familiarity. The organizing committee has set up activities which hopes to foster camaraderie among different sectors interested in interventional cardiology. These activities shall be highlighted in the welcome dinner and fellowship night of the symposium.

This year's venue, the Canyon Woods Resort Club, is a secluded enclave in the highlands of tagaytay will give us the ambiance and the complete facilities to realizes these goals of the organizing committee.

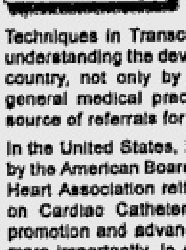
We appreciate very much the warm response that you give to our invitation last year in Subic. This year, we are hoping for a more enthusiastic response from you.

REYNALDO P. FAJARDO, M.D.
Over-all Chairman
12th Annual Scientific Convention

Central to the field of interventional cardiology is the development of new devices and new techniques in tackling more complex and more difficult lesions in order to achieve better result with safer outcomes. In this 12th Annual Scientific Session of the PSCCI, the scientific committee has fittingly bannered the theme "Familiarity with Devices and Techniques in Transcatheter Therapy". This will be addressed in the context of complex coronary interventions in general and bifurcation lesions in particular, as well as selected interesting non-cardiac interventions.

The adjunctive role of the once-novel GP 2b/3a inhibitors in acute coronary syndrome will be crystallized and the role of perioperative moderate sedation in cardiac interventional procedures highlighted. All these will be presented amidst the clean, cool mountain air of Tagaytay City. Welcome to the Canyon Woods Residential Resort to learn, relax, enjoy, meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

Bun Yok O. Dy, M.D.
Founding President
Philippine Society of Cardiac Catheterization and Interventions, Inc.



In behalf of the Philippine Heart Association and the Philippine College of Cardiology, I would like to congratulate the officers of the Philippine Society of Cardiovascular Catheterization and Interventions, Inc. and the members of the Organizing Committee of its 12th Annual Scientific Convention.

Intervention cardiology has become a major player in the management of complex cardiovascular problems.

This year's theme, "Familiarity with Devices and Techniques in Transcatheter Therapy", underscores the importance of understanding the devices and procedures now available available in our country, not only by the interventional cardiologists but also by the general medical practitioners who are in the frontline and the main source of referrals for the procedures.

In the United States, its practice requires board certification sanctioned by the American Board of Internal Medicine. In our country, the Philippine Heart Association relies on the joint efforts and vigilance of its Council on Cardiac Catheterization and Interventions and your Society for promotion and advancement of the field, training of the physicians and more importantly, in ensuring public safety through responsible use of these techniques. While we have been successful in many respects, our social obligation in these of economic privation calls that we exert all efforts to make these procedures accessible and affordable to more of our countrymen.

Congratulations and Mabuhay!

Norbert Lingling D. Uy, FPCP, FPCC, FACC
President, Philippine Heart Association

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Immediate Past President

Program of Activities

TIME	TOPIC / ACTIVITIES	SPEAKERS / CHAIRMAN
April 29, 2005		
7:00 - 9:00 pm	Welcome Dinner and Registration	
April 30, 2005		
	BREAKFAST SYMPOSIUM	Moderator: Ramon M. Pineda, M.D.
7:00 - 8:30 am	The use of GPIIb/IIIa in Acute Coronary Syndrome	James Ho, M.D.
	3rd PSCCI Dy Bun Yok Lecture	Moderator: Delfin V. Encarnacion III, M.D.
8:30 - 9:15	PCI in Complex Coronary Lesions	Tan Kok Soon, M.D.
9:15 - 9:30	Open Forum	
	SESSION ON CHALLENGING TRANSCATHETER TECHNIQUES	Moderator: Ramoncito B. Tria, M.D.
9:30 - 10:15	A Comprehensive Outlook on Renal Artery Stenting	Timothy C. Dy, M.D.
10:15 - 11:00	Novel Approaches in Bifurcation Lesions	Philip Wong, M.D.
11:00 - 11:15	Open Forum	
11:15 - 1:30 pm	LUNCH SYMPOSIUM CREST	Rogelio V. Tangco, M.D.
	GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING	
1:30 - 3:00	3rd RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION	Chairman: Aurelia G. Leus, M.D.; Nadine G. Abela, M.D.
3:00 - 3:45	Perioperative Moderate Sedation in Cardiac Interventional Procedures	
	SESSION ON PEDIATRIC INTERVENTION	Moderator: Juan G. Reganion, M.D.
3:45 - 4:30	PDA Stenting	Speaker: Edelwisa P. Mercado, M.D.; Reactors: (1) Wilberto Lopez, M.D. (2) Teofilo Cantre, M.D.
4:30 - 4:45	Open Forum	
4:45 - 5:00	Closing Ceremonies	
7:00 pm	Fellowship Night & Induction Ceremonies	

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BIR goes after 'jueteng' lords

From page A1

are going after their properties," Parayno said at a press briefing at the Department of Justice where the BIR filed a tax evasion case against executives of Columbia Sports Philippines Inc.

Forfeiture

Hearing of the campaign, Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño suggested that the BIR and Department of Finance, which is implementing RATE, enlist the help of the Anti-Money Laundering Council to go after the bank deposits of illegal gamblers.

"They should also go after financiers and politicians protecting [jueteng operators]," Zuño said.

He said the Office of the Solicitor General can later file forfeiture proceedings against the jueteng operators and seize their assets.

Asked why the agency decided to go after jueteng lords, Parayno replied: "BIR needs money. The government needs money."

Ten names

Upon its request last December, the BIR was furnished by Cruz a list containing 10 names of suspected jueteng lords, according to Parayno. He declined to name the gambling operators.

Lawyer Arnel Guballa, head of the BIR's National Investigation Division, said the agency was conducting a "preliminary investigation" of the suspected jueteng lords for "tax purposes."

"Under the tax code, income from whatever source is taxable," Guballa said.

Parayno said it did not matter whether the income was legal or illegal. "Once we can demonstrate satisfactorily that the income had not been declared for tax purposes, then we file a case of tax evasion. It's as simple as that," he said.

Asked whether the BIR was also going after people engaged in smuggling, drug trafficking and kidnapping, he answered in the affirmative. "We are going after as many as we can run down to the ground. We'll run them down," Parayno said.

The government tried to go after jueteng operators in the past, raiding their homes and arresting them and the collectors, but it has failed to stamp out the illegal numbers game.

There were also a series of congressional hearings in which suspected jueteng lords like Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, Charing Magbuhos and Bolok Santos were invited, but nothing came of the hearings.

Bonded warehouse

In the tax evasion case filed in the DOJ, Columbia Sports executives Vincent Lim, Luis Lim, Lilia Cua and several John Does were charged with failing to declare their income and to pay taxes in 2002 and 2003.

Parayno said a certain Harry Tan was among the owners of the firm, but he said Tan had denied owning the company.

A check by RATE operatives with the Bureau of Customs showed that Columbia, which had put up a bonded warehouse, imported goods amounting to P599.4 million in 2002 and P2.8 billion in 2003.

P1.3-B tax liability

"Despite the volume of business, Columbia did not report any income during the years it made substantial importations. Columbia ended its operations on Oct. 27 without filing any income tax returns with the BIR or financial statements with the Security and Exchange Commission," RATE said in a statement.

Columbia, which is estimated to have P1.3 billion in tax liabilities, is in the importation and manufacture of plastic materials, bags, wrapping garments, cloth hangers and basins.

Forest czar quits, too

From page A1

Relations Services last year with the rank of brigadier general.

In his letter of resignation to President Macapagal-Arroyo dated April 27, Corpus said: "As you may have known, I have had a very turbulent past, away from my family most of the time. I believe that I have to make it up with them with the little time I have left."

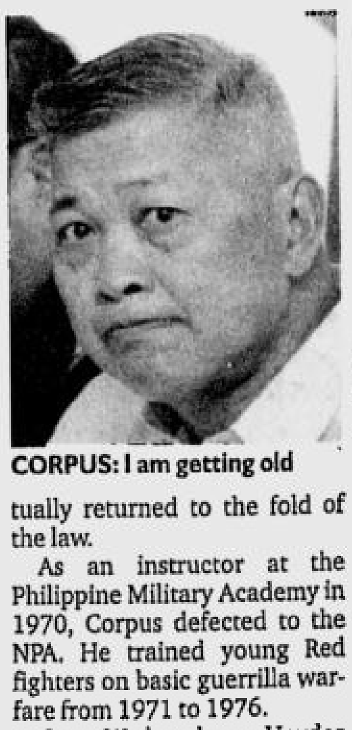
"I am getting old. I want to spend more time with my family," the 60-year-old Corpus told the INQUIRER.

He said he retired because he also wanted "to have more time to write."

Write

"I'll just write and write. I have a lot to write about," he said.

In 1989, he published a book "Silent War," a look at the insurgency from the point of view of a soldier who had defected to the enemy and eventually returned to the fold of the law.

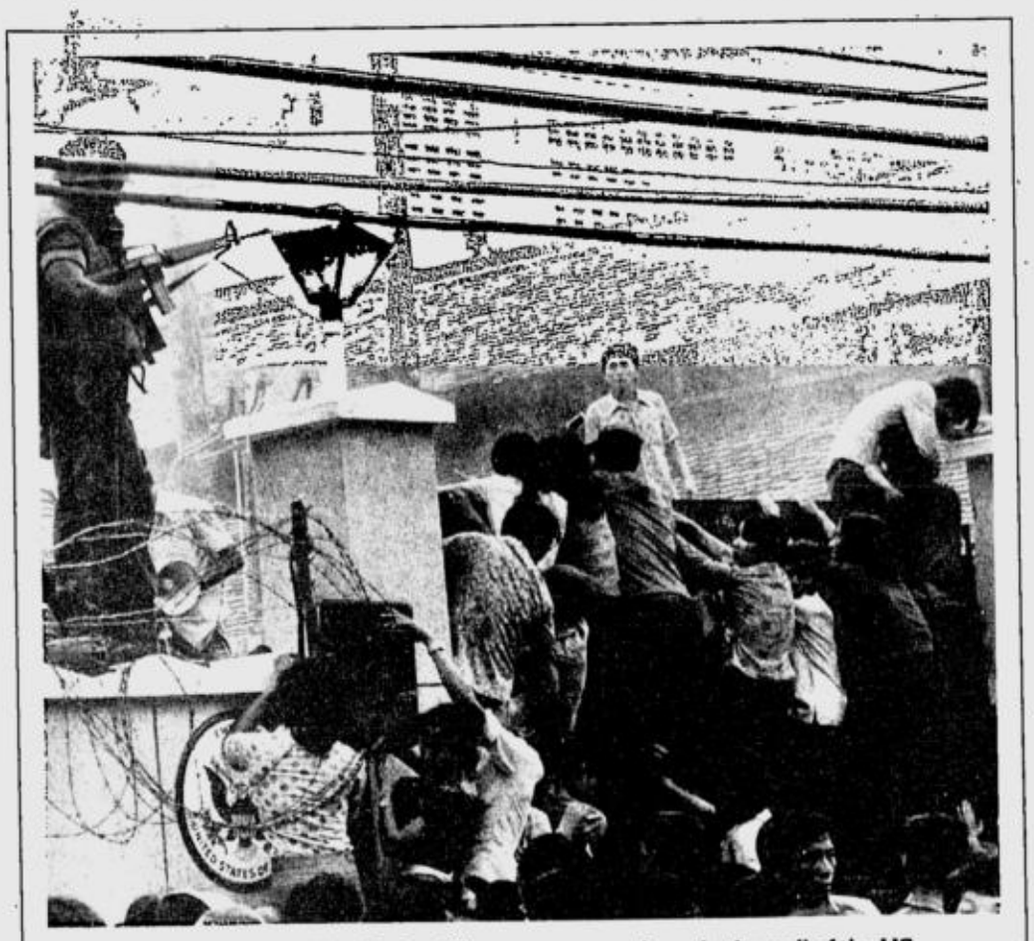

CORPUS: I am getting old

As an instructor at the Philippine Military Academy in 1970, Corpus defected to the NPA. He trained young Red fighters on basic guerrilla warfare from 1971 to 1976.

On Wednesday, Haydee Yorac quit as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, saying she wanted to go back to private life. *(Story on Page A1.)*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco



REMEMBER THIS SCENE?—Mobs of Vietnamese people scale the wall of the US Embassy in Saigon, Vietnam, trying to get to the helicopter pickup zone, just before the end of the Vietnam War on April 29, 1975. US Marines and civilians beat them back with their boots and rifle butts. AP

Fear of punishment seen having clouded Japan train driver's thinking

TOKYO—Fear of punishment for overrunning the platform at a station and falling behind schedule probably clouded the thinking of the 23-year-old driver of a train that derailed earlier this week, killing more than 100 people, railway union leaders said Thursday.

Several union members, including two engineers who had experience driving on the same stretch of track where the accident occurred on Monday, told a news conference that delays and overruns are regularly met with severe punishment, ranging from verbal abuse to threats of being fired or transferred.

"I'm certain he was desperate to recover the lost time," said Osamu Yomono, vice president of the Japan Federation of Railway Workers.

Railway officials, however, denied they were punishing drivers too severely.

Driver Ryujiro Takami overshot the platform at a station in Amagasaki, in western Japan, and had to back up his train to let passengers off.

The mistake put him just 90 seconds off schedule—but that is considered a substantial delay in Japan, which prides itself on one of the world's most efficient, albeit crowded, train systems. Some 60 million Japanese ride the trains each day, according to government statistics.

Though the cause of the accident has not been formally determined, investigators believe the train exceeded the speed limit when it entered the curve, possibly causing the train to derail and crash into an adjacent apartment building.

Takami's own body was among several dug out from the mangled train on Thursday, bringing the death toll over 100. It was the worst train disaster in Japan in four decades.

Yomono said Takami had been subjected to harsh punishment previously for overrunning a stop. Yomono and the other union officials said such punishment, known as "dayshift education," was regularly meted out to errant drivers by JR West, the operator of the train line where the accident occurred.

"The training involves being surrounded by superiors, being verbally insulted and abused and being forced to write meaningless reports," Yomono said, adding that Takami had been put through such treatment for 13 days for a previous error.

"The driver in this accident probably was thinking that he would be subjected to this treatment," he said. "Fear prevented him from making a rational decision." AP

Echoes of Iraq ring in Vietnam at anniversary of War's end

By Brian Williams

HO CHI MINH CITY—Military strategists will be debating for years the similarities and differences of the US wars in Vietnam and Iraq but on the ground in Vietnam there is no argument—Baghdad was a mistake, a big one.

From Diem Bien Phu, where Vietnamese communists also beat the French in colonial times; to My Lai, site of the Vietnam War's worst atrocity; to the tank commander who smashed down the gates of Saigon's presidential palace, there is genuine bewilderment at US actions in Iraq.

"Didn't the Americans learn anything from Vietnam?" asks tour guide Pham Phu Bang, 76, who fought both the French at Diem Bien Phu and the Americans from 1966 to 1968, including taking part in the 1968 Tet offensive on then Saigon.

"Why are they in Iraq? It's the same."

But as the 30th anniversary approaches on Saturday of the end of what Vietnamese call "The American War," there is equal bewilderment at suicide and other tactics used by opponents of the US invasion of Iraq as well as Islamic extremists.

And in a country where the communists won by mobilizing the support of every man, woman and child in their part of the country, as well as many in the then capitalist south, there is little sympathy for Saddam Hussein's downfall.

Many believe Saddam lost the war and power simply because he did not have his own people on his side to stand up to the US invasion as the Vietnamese did.

Dialogue needed

The official stance of Vietnam, which is hoping to take relations with Washington to a higher level accompanied by greater aid and trade opportunities, is more circumspect.

Pham Sanh Chau, deputy director of Hanoi's Institute for International Relations, a government think tank, denounces the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks as well as Baghdad bombings which have killed many civilians.

"We are opposed to any kind of terrorism anywhere," Chau says. "And how can you win a war when you harm your own people like in Baghdad. Saddam couldn't mobilize his own people."

But he believes the killing fields of Iraq would go on, if the two sides didn't start a dialogue.

"When people are ready to give their lives in suicide attacks then you have to accept that they have strong beliefs. You have to understand them. You have to talk to them."

"In Vietnam we were all ready to give our lives for our freedom. Were we a nation of suicide bombers? Of course not."

Chau believes Islamic extremists made a strategic mistake with attacks like Sept. 11 because rather than winning over world opinion as Vietnam did, the result has been the opposite.

"We never thought of taking our war outside our borders like al-Qaida. How could we? I cannot imagine how bad the backlash would have been in the world."

Vietnam Defense Minister Pham Van Tra made the same argument in a speech last week on how Vietnam won its war.

He said the US antiwar movement was crucial in Vietnam's victory.

"We must realize that the war in Vietnam was different from those in other countries," he said. "The country fought on three fronts: military, political and proselytizing the enemy troops."

'Iraq war is scary'

"I cannot say which one played a more crucial role."

At My Lai, where US troops went on a rampage that became infamous as the war's worst atrocity, survivors and foreign tourists see in the horrors there, an echo of Iraq.

"There was My Lai and now there is Iraq," a visitor from Boston wrote in a memorial book this month.

"Is what's going on in Iraq now any different from here.

"What god-awful stories will emerge from there in years to come," wrote Anne from Northern Ireland.

Pham Thanh Cong, a survivor of My Lai who is also director of the My Lai Museum, says he is often asked by foreigners to compare Vietnam and Iraq.

"I protest the war in Iraq because just like here, it is innocent people who also die there," he says.

Ha Thi Quay, an elderly woman survivor, says she is aware of the events in Iraq through television.

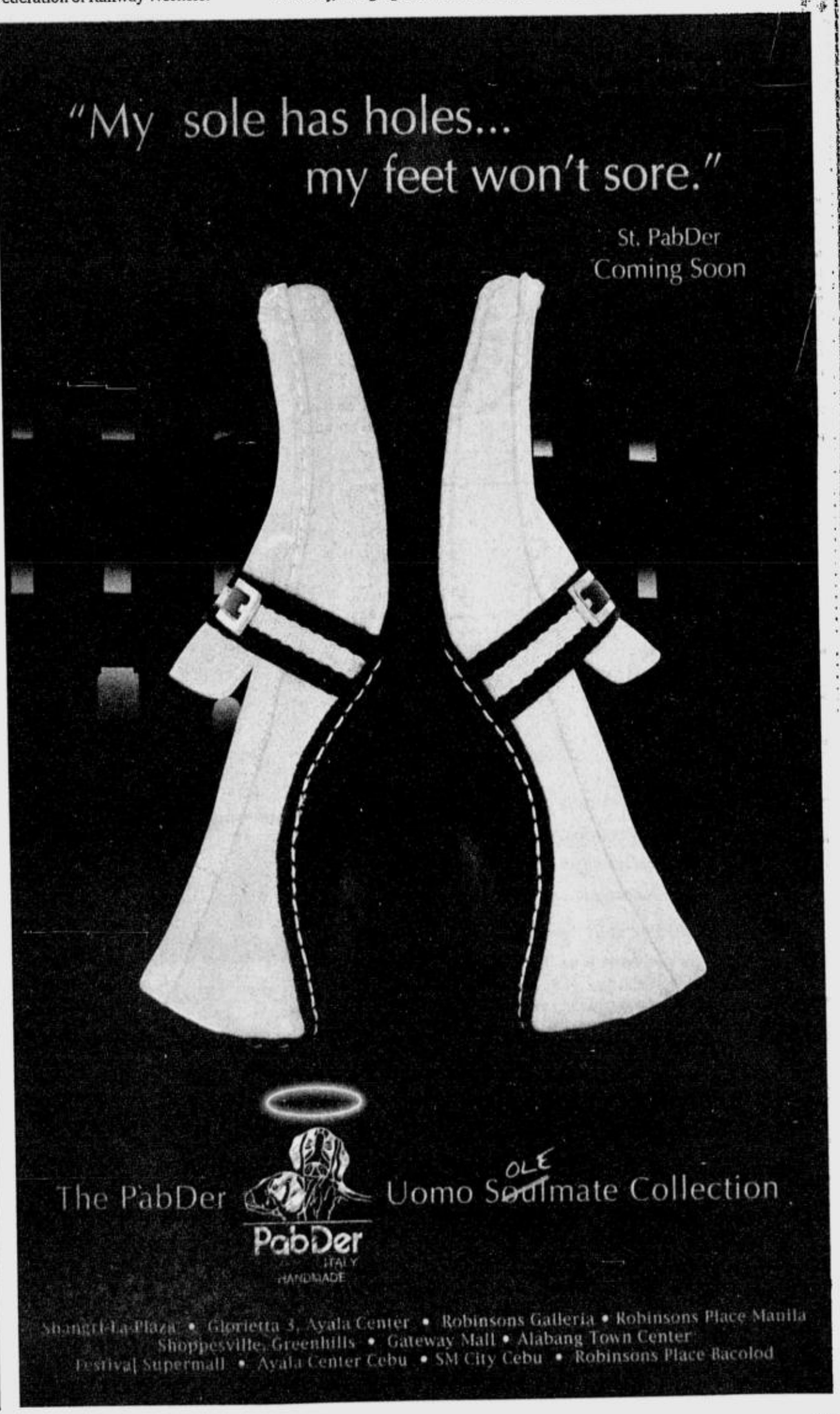
"It looks as scary as what I went through. How sad the world still can't live in peace. Yes, Iraq reminds me of Vietnam."

No quick war

Among Vietnam veterans of the war, there is no doubt that the Vietnam and Iraq wars are different in scale and reason, but Washington should not have gone into Iraq.

Nguyen Va Tap, driver of the tank that smashed through the gates of the palace where the US-supported administration made its last stand, said just as in Vietnam the United States miscalculated in thinking the Iraq war would be over quickly.

"They wanted a quick war, but it hasn't been and the situation is still not stable and the number of American casualties continues to rise. I think they really made a mistake," he said. *Reuters*



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Aging global population doubles number of breast, lung cancer cases

LONDON—An aging population has fueled a rise in cancer and contributed to a doubling in breast and lung cancer cases in the past 30 years, researchers said on Thursday.

But rates of stomach and cervical cancer have fallen thanks to improved hygiene and screening programs.

"Cancer is increasing rapidly and this is due mainly to the changing demographics of the world population," Lucy Boyd, of the charity Cancer Research UK which compiled the report, said.

As people get older they are more likely to develop cancer.

The rise in breast cancer cases, from half a million in 1975 to more than 1.1 million cases worldwide is due to women living longer and a growing world population.

The scientists analyzed statistics from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) database and compared incidence and death rates in different regions of the world.

They predict cases of lung cancer, the biggest cancer killer, will soar in developing countries in coming decades.

Lung cancer rates tend to rise decades after the number of smokers has peaked. In areas of the world such as eastern Africa, central America and southeast Asia where the number of smokers has risen lung cancer cases are expected to increase over the next 20 years.

The developed world has historically had high rates of cancer but Boyd said smoking and changes in diet are expected to push up rates of cancer in poorer countries.

Each year 10.9 million people worldwide are diagnosed with cancer and 6.7 million die from the disease. About 12 percent of deaths worldwide are due to cancer, according to the report.

Male cancer rates are highest in the United States, Hungary and New Zealand and are lowest in Niger, Gambia and the Congo.

The United States also has the highest rate of female cancers along with Israel and New Zealand. By contrast, Tunisia, Gambia and Oman have the lowest.

Lung, breast, bowel, stomach, prostate, cervical and esophageal are the most commonly diagnosed cancers. Lung, stomach and liver are the biggest killers.

Prof. John Toy, the medical director of the charity, said cancer is still mainly a disease of the developed world.

"Only four percent of deaths in Africa are due to cancer, compared to 19 percent in Europe," he said.

"Although these figures show a persistent increase in the number of people in the world being diagnosed with cancer, developing and refining new treatments will continue to improve the chances of surviving the disease," he added. *Reuters*

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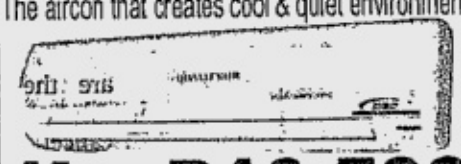

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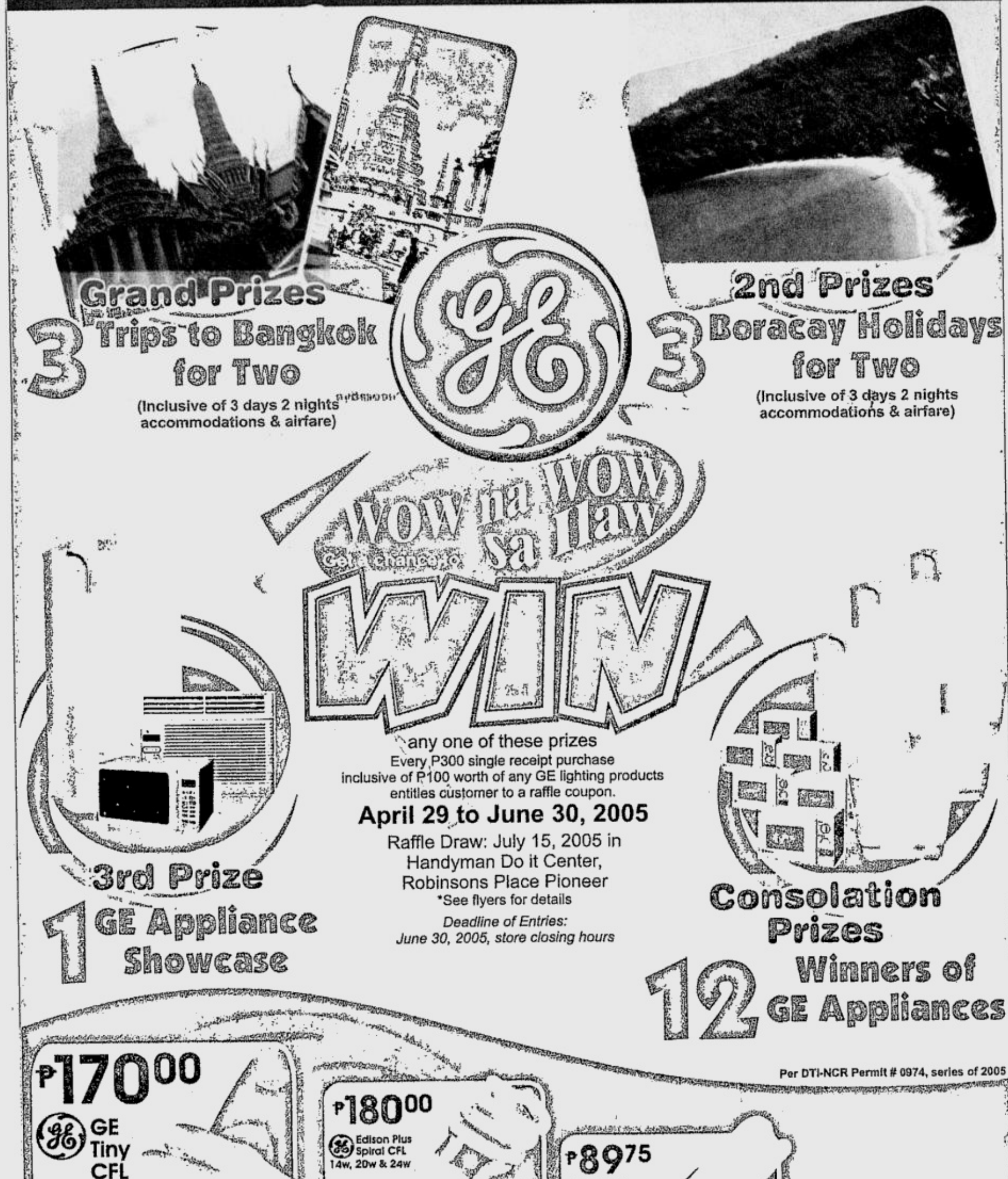
PHILIPPINE
The W

A MONTAGE of some of Britain's national daily papers April 28, with British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the war in Iraq making the headlines. AP



Jurors focus on

JACKSON

SANTA MARIA, California—Jurors in Michael Jackson's child sex trial are on the edge of their seats waiting to hear what his ex-wife will say on the witness stand Thursday, after a day of startling revelations.

Her brief appearance late Wednesday was packed with surprises, as she tearfully expressed her desire for renewed contact with the singer, and admitted she had lied about his parenting in a recorded interview in 2003.

And in a blow to prosecutors, who called her to the stand, she flatly denied that the interview, in which she praised the singer as "a wonderful man" and a model parent, had been scripted.

"Absolutely not," the heavy-set blonde said, adding that she had declined to even look at a prepared list of questions.

She testified that she had agreed immediately when Jackson asked her to make the tape in early 2003, although it was the first time the two had spoken in over three years.

"He told me there was a video coming out and it was full of lies and would I help, and I said 'yes, as always,'" she said.

Brief excerpts of her nine-hour interview were seen in a television show Jackson had made in February 2003, following the broadcast of a damaging British documentary that sent child sex allegations swirling around the singer.

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FROLICKING GAZELLES
Young girls jump into a swimming pool at Tokyo's
the pool for the season. The hotel will attract visi
"Golden Week," starts Friday.

Thai troops use ga

BANGTAWA, Thailand—Armed with brooms
stead of rifles, half a dozen Thai soldiers leapin
their truck in a sleepy fishing village are the
"friendly face" of the security forces in the coun
restive Muslim south.

At least 30,000 troops and police have bee
ployed in the three southernmost provinces of
tani, Narathiwat and Yala to curb a wave of gu
la bombings and shootings that has claimed
than 600 lives since January last year.

Until recently, military checkpoints and sol
cruising around in armored Humvees gave
land's far south, which has a century-long histo
antipathy to the central government in Ban
the air of a region at war.

Now, the Buddhist authorities are on a char
fensive with Muslims, who make up 80 perce
the region's population, to calm the anger stok
the violence, including the killing of 106 mach
wielding Muslim militants a year ago today.

"People say we look harsh with our guns, and
don't want to be seen that way," Lt. Ruangyos

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Opposition accuses Blair of lying about Iraq

LONDON—Iraq exploded onto the British election campaign on Thursday as leaked advice from the government's top lawyer, questioning the war's legality, hit Tony Blair just a week before polling day.

Trailing the prime minister badly in opinion surveys, opposition parties seized on the secret pre-war report from Attorney General Lord Peter Goldsmith as showing Blair was deceitful.

"The whole things reeks. (There has been) gross deception," said Dominic Grieve, legal affairs spokesperson for the main opposition Conservative Party.

The deeply unpopular Iraq war remains Blair's Achilles Heel, with many Britons believing he misled them over the extent of Saddam Hussein's banned weapons program—London's main justification for joining the US-led 2003 invasion.

The latest legal row taps directly into the hot election issue of Blair's trustworthiness and echoes allegations that the government also pressed the country's intelligence services to produce a clear-cut case for war.

The Goldsmith leak has ruined Blair's attempts to focus the last days of the campaign on local issues like the economy, health and education. But analysts said it was unlikely to derail his bid for a third term.

The March 7, 2003 document shows Goldsmith cast doubt on the legal grounds of war just days before Blair ordered troops in.

Goldsmith said then "a court might well conclude" UN Security Council resolutions at the time did not authorize war.

"I remain of the opinion that the safest legal course would be to secure the adoption of a further resolution to authorize the use of force," Goldsmith wrote.

But Goldsmith was not categorical, also saying Britain could build "a reasonable case" for war based on two earlier UN resolutions if it had "hard evidence" of wrongdoing by Saddam.

Ten days later, however, after Britain failed to obtain a new resolution, Goldsmith presented the Cabinet and parliament with advice that the war was legal—and mentioned no doubts.

"It is now clear that advice did change and we must now be told what or who changed it," Conservative leader Michael Howard said, implying Goldsmith was leant on by Blair in his eagerness to win public and political support for the war.

Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesperson Sir Menzies Campbell said: "The question is what caused the Attorney General to... rid his mind of the doubts?"

He said parliament would not have backed war if it had known Goldsmith's first thoughts.

Blair, President George W. Bush's closest foreign ally, has denied allegations Goldsmith bowed under political pressure.

"He never changed his mind. That is completely untrue," Foreign Minister Jack Straw said on Wednesday.

Goldsmith himself said in a statement on Wednesday night that the leaked document supported the government's case that it would be legal to go to war without a second UN resolution.

"It does not say the war was unlawful but confirms the conclusion I reached was that a sufficient basis for the use of force was established without a second resolution," he said. *Reuters*

Jackson's ex-wife

mission that elec- troom, Rowe ad- ot everything she view was truthful omments about ting.

adjourned for the could go into fur- aving the court- se.

could not have ffhanger," said le- rew Cohen.

ills are in a lot of int to this case. So f lawyers have to ure out what she's e're going to have a very sleepless night," he said.

Court observers marvelled over Rowe's apparent enduring loyalty to her former husband, who did not seem to have returned the sentiment.

Rowe said the couple "never shared a home" during their three-year marriage, and that she has not seen their children for two and a half to three years.

She voluntarily gave up her parental rights in 2001 because of the difficulties imposed by a custody agreement that limited her visits with the children to eight hours every 45 days, she said.

"The visitations were not comfortable. We were hooked up at a hotel. When I would bring things to do, like fingerpaints or coloring, the nanny was always very concerned they would get dirty," she said.

But when she committed to do the video for Jackson, she said the singer had agreed to allow her to see him and the children afterwards.

Rowe dabbed at her eyes with tissues as she explained that she had made the video with the expectation that she would be "reintroduced to them and to be reacquainted with their dad."

Asked why she wanted to be reacquainted with Jackson, she gazed across the courtroom at him, her eyes welling with tears, and said: "He's my friend." *AFP*

Akasaka Prince Hotel April 28 as the hotel opens ors as Japan's weeklong vacation known as the

AFP

rdening vs unrest

mas said as his subordinates swept up leaves in Bangtawa village.

"So we put down our assault rifles and go to villages to help them develop. Despite their initial fear of us, we have become friends. Now, there are lots of smiles," said Ruangyos, who had an army-issue pistol holstered in his belt.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, whose tough stance on the violence helped him to a landslide election victory in February but which lost him all support in the region, did a dramatic U-turn last month and promised a more softer approach.

By winning over Muslims in the Malay-speaking region, where separatists fought a low-key insurgency in the 1970s and '80s, the government hopes it can isolate guerrillas who strike almost daily and who are seldom caught.

After 16 months of unrest, which started in January 2004 when gunmen stormed an army base and stole almost 400 rifles, the government appears no closer to identifying the ringleaders of the insurgency, or what they want. *Reuters*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2005

ISSN 0116-2642

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 20 No. 140

OPINION

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

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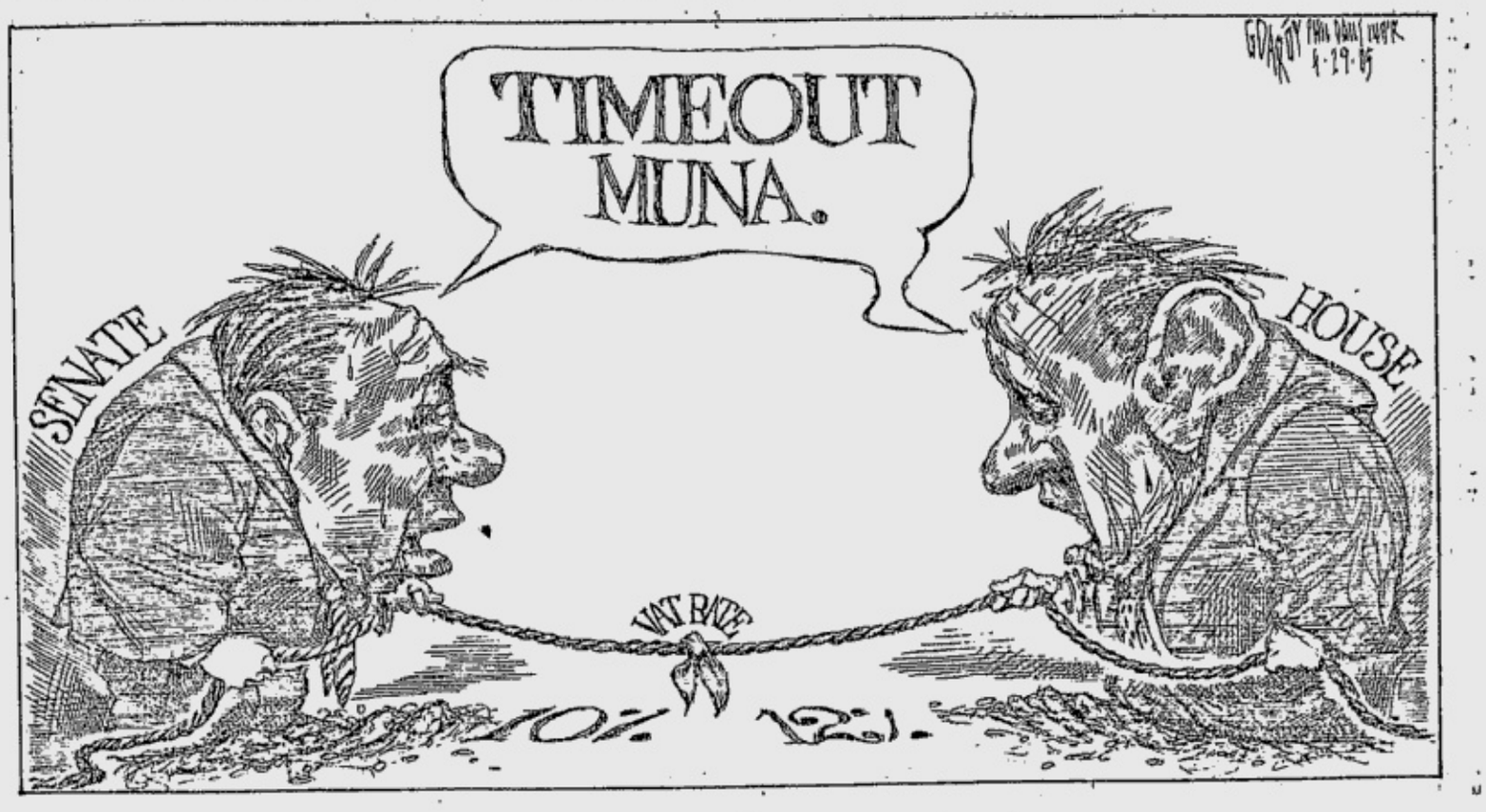

Sad departure

THE RESIGNATION of Haydee Yorac as chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government is a big blow to efforts to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their close associates as well as a sad day for competent and selfless government service. Since coming to the PCGG in 2001, Yorac, a constitutional lawyer and an advocate for good government, has provided the backbone and much of the vision for efforts of the PCGG to do justice to the nation raided by the plunderers of the long and dark Marcos years.

EDITORIAL

Although Yorac has said she resigned to rest and later go back to private law practice, it is characteristic of the high-profile PCGG chairmanship that any resignation would have to be evaluated in the context of the political struggles inherent in such an office. She denies having resigned out of compulsion or disappointment, but it is obvious that recent administration initiatives regarding the government stake in the food and beverage giant, San Miguel Corp., did not sit well with her.

More specifically, it seems that Yorac was flabbergasted to find out that the five government representatives in SMC had voted along with the rest of the board for a controversial stock rights offering that diluted later government's hold on the company. It is the height of folly for the five government representatives to have voted for the offering.

Although to her credit, President Macapagal-Arroyo directed government financing institutions to buy the stocks and ensure the government retained its hold on SMC, the damage was done. Unable to raise enough funds for the offering, the government saw its shares diluted and the stake of Kirin Brewery Ltd., of Japan, an ally of SMC president Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., increase.

The incident shows the tortuous road toward the recovery of the Marcos wealth. The government has staked its claim on the SMC seats by virtue of its contention, upheld by the courts, that Cojuangco used coco levy funds to gain control of SMC during the Marcos years. The funds were collected forcibly from coconut farmers by the dictatorship and have been declared public by the Sandiganbayan.

Although the claim is strong, it seems that government representatives in the SMC board tend to pander to the Cojuangco gallery. How else can one explain their penchant to make decisions that go against the best interest of the government and the people? How else can one explain their penchant to bite the hand that feeds them? Or is a different hand feeding them?

At the very least, the government representatives are guilty of gross incompetence and utter stupidity! What they did was similar to the egregious performance of Antonio Leviste as National Development Corp. representative in the Consunji-controlled Semirara Coal Corp. It was Leviste who ignored the challenge to raise just P4.18 million when Semirara declared a stock offering so as to improve the government's position in the coal firm. As a result of a three-step decrease-capital increase-stock dividend, the stake of the NDC and the Development Bank of the Philippines has now been reduced from 22.7 percent to about 4.85 percent of the country's largest coal producer, after the NDC and DBP declined to subscribe to the capital call of only P19.66 million.

Had the NDC subscribed to its proportionate shareholding of 4,181,126 shares at P1 per share, equivalent to 41,811,260 shares after Semirara declared a 900-percent stock dividend, that P4.18 million would now be worth more than P1.5 billion! Instead, the windfall went to the Consunjis!

So was the stupid oversight self-inflicted? We don't know. What we know is that Leviste is still the government representative in Semirara. And the five government representatives in SMC are still there.

Yorac, of course, hasn't complained about the government's handling of SMC affairs, but such bungling only compounds her woes and her troubles. She is not growing any younger. Having suffered a mild stroke in 2003, she's now battling cancer.

Her resignation, of course, does not end the challenge for the PCGG to live up to its mission and do justice to history and to the generations of Filipinos who have been victimized by the plunderers of the Marcos regime. The President has appointed another constitutionalist, Camilo Sabio, to continue the fight. Sabio is taking over a position whose demanding contours have been more than filled up by a courageous woman. May he be a worthy successor to Yorac.

MMDA needs PNP help

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

AS soon as it was unveiled last Wednesday, the seven-foot statue of Marcelo H. del Pilar on Plaridel Park in Malate was the subject of much discussion. Made by sculptor Julie Lluch, the statue shows a standing Del Pilar (pen name: Plaridel) holding a copy of La Solidaridad with his left hand and pointing to the sky with his right hand.

What is he pointing at? What is the meaning of that index finger? Some people have provided answers, both serious and funny.

Lluch says Plaridel "is pointing a finger at the abuses of the Spanish government, explaining (its) evils... the ills of society during the time of the friars."

Not only the abuses of the Spanish colonial government but also the abuses of our own society and government and other colonial powers, in modern times, said observers. It is a warning to our leaders, like a father wagging a finger at a naughty child, said others.

Still others have these interpretations:

He is pointing an accusing finger at our leaders, telling them that they are to blame for the mess we are in now.

He is pointing to God in Heaven, warning them that God can see what they are doing.

He is pointing to the sky to remind fellow journalists that possibilities for doing good are limitless.

He is warning the powerful and abusive of their mortality, as if saying, *"Isang bala ka lang!"*

One journalist said Plaridel is for Fernando Poe Jr., flashing the signature index finger of the popular opposition candidate whom his followers (naturally) insist was the real president.

Plaridel is the idol of Filipino journalists because he never wavered in fighting the Spanish colonizers in his writings in La Solidaridad, the opposition newspaper he founded and edited. Besides, journalists identify with him because like them Plaridel lived in penury and was persecuted but nevertheless never gave up.

The next step for Samahang Plaridel, the association of journalists that sponsored the monument along with Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, is to have a corner of the park officially and legally declared as the Philippine Hyde Park where anybody can freely criticize the government and its officials without fear. It will be our monument, too, to Freedom of Expression.

By the way, Samahang Plaridel's clubhouse and Front Page piano bar, the new watering hole of journalists, is aptly located in Ermita. It is near the corner of the street named after Marcelo H. del Pilar and the street named after Teodoro M. Kalaw, another journalist during the American colonial regime who penned the famous editorial "Aves de Rapina" (Birds of Prey, referring to the Americans). The Front Page is open to the public.

* * *

We cannot find a better chairman of the Metro Manila Development Authority than Bayani Fernando. All the other previous MMDA and MMC chairmen were namby-pamby, allowing anarchy to reign on the streets and sidewalks of Metro Manila. It is only Fernando who has tried and is still trying to enforce the laws that would restore order. Nobody has been able to clear the sidewalks and put a little order on the streets as much as he did.

It is the sidewalk vendors and drivers who are opposing Fernando, naturally, because they are being forced to obey the law and can no longer go about their anarchic ways. And they have the sympathy of some of the mayors because they are voters. But the mayors, singly or all together, cannot do better than what he has already done. President Macapagal-Arroyo did right in declaring support for the MMDA chair.

I have a few observations, however, that I hope will help improve the traffic situation in Metro Manila. One is that the MMDA spurn the help offered by PNP Director General Arturo Lumibao to enforce traffic rules.

The MMDA wants exclusive jurisdiction over the main streets of the metropolis, allegedly because of the *tong* collection. But are MMDA officials so naïve as not to suspect that many of their traffic enforcers are also collecting *tong*? Even if they are not, drivers are not intimidated by the MMDA enforcers because most of them don't really know the traffic rules they are supposed to enforce. In fact, they are not respected because they are former garbage collectors.

The enforcers know their shortcomings and therefore suffer from a collective inferiority complex and avoid accosting and confronting erring drivers. They are content with standing in the middle of the street and waving their arms at the vehicles so they can be seen by their superiors. Even if all hell is breaking loose at the street corner because of unruly drivers, an MMDA enforcer will not leave his spot to straighten it out. He has no desire at all to make drivers and pedestrians obey rules to make the flow of traffic faster and smoother. To him, it is just a job. As soon as his superior passes by, he disappears (where to is a big mystery).

In fact, realizing the shortcomings and feelings of inferiority of their enforcers, the MMDA management has come to their rescue by limiting contact between them and drivers. The vehicles of erring drivers are simply photographed and copies of the photos are sent to the owners with instructions to pay the fine at the nearest bank.

While this lightens the work load of the MMDA and increases its collection from fines, it does not give any warning to other drivers not to break traffic rules. They see this vehicle blatantly violating traffic rules and nothing happens to the driver, not knowing that it is being photographed and that retribution will come later. All they think of is that that driver got away with it, and so can they.

Censorship: good intentions gone awry

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

RESPONSIBLE people in media and the arts have launched a crusade against "scandal-oriented television talk shows" as "unethical journalism." One of them was anxious about the "long-term effects [on the youth] of too much lurid gossip."

I share their concern, but I am just as worried about their proffered solution, namely, a campaign for advertising groups and their clients to pull out their ads and boycott these shows. They will empower private groups to do what the state cannot: censor speech. They remind us of what Brandeis said: "The greatest threats to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding."

Scandal TV brings us back to the old dilemma of which Harvard philosopher Michael Sandel spoke. "Liberals often take pride in defending what they oppose" because "it is one thing to allow [scandal TV, for instance], something else to affirm it." Apparently, scandal TV emerged in the war of the big networks and the battle for TV audiences.

It is easy to understand why the networks have become so desperate and brazen. Desperate, because in the age of consumer democracy, the remote control is to the viewer as the scepter was to kings of old, and the viewer holds power literally in the palm of his hand. He casts his vote not every three years (as in the case of political democracy, with no assurance that his vote will be counted, and I am referring to Florida, USA, of course), but every infinitesimal second, as he zaps from one channel to another at the flick of his thumb. Brazen, because new technologies like hidden and cell phone cameras enable these shows to grab footage that can be so graphic—and therefore so true.

Perhaps that is why the crusaders have given up on the law and turned to the market instead—the stock legal responses to such outrages are simply too tame. Constitutional doctrine may say that commercial speech need not be as highly protected as political speech because it does not form an integral part of the robust exchange of ideas vital to a democratic society. But the purveyors of scandal TV can claim that theirs is journalism; they do purport to tell the viewers information about events of interest to the public.

The first ground for regulation is the law on defamation. Yet since the victims are typically celebrities, the speech—even if sensationalized—remains protected under the famed New York Times v. Sullivan standard for as long as there is absence of malice (defined as "reckless disregard for the truth or falsity" of the report).

The second mode of regulation is the law on obscenity. Admittedly, even courts find it difficult to fix an objective definition of what is obscene. The law clerks of Justice Byron White said their boss considered obscene any picture that showed an erection, and called this the "angle of the dangle" test. The law clerks of Justice William Brennan said that their very liberal justice would, on the other hand, allow anything short of an erection, the "limp dick" standard. On the other hand, Justice William Douglas was known to say that the real test was the effect on the audience—obscenity lies "in the crotch of the beholder."

The feminist law professor Catherine MacKinnon seized on similar logic to say that therefore obscenity is not protected by the freedom of speech because it is not speech but conduct, something that provokes a bodily reaction, and remarked in her beautiful book "Only Words": "The penis is not an organ of thought." Think about that.

There is yet another mode of restraint: self-regulation. I recall last year's debate over the Napoleon Brandy advertisement with the double entendre, *"Nakatikim ka na ba ng kinse años?"*, a naughty copy-line that literally drove Sen. Alfredo Lim up the wall, clambering up a ladder to tear down a *kinse años* billboard. The Philippine Association of National Advertisers called for self-regulation and supported the decision by the Advertising Board of the Philippines (also a private group) to recall the Clearance to Air for this ad campaign.

How different is this from the scandal TV boycott? The decision was made by an accountable industry group, based on a Code of Ethics adopted by the advertisers. Obviously, this form of restraint is not available in this case.

The real challenge is that we are applying old forms of free speech protection to new conditions. Historically, the First Amendment was written to protect "the lonely pamphleteer and the soapbox orator." It was not designed for today's world when speech is big business; publishers do not merely sell ideas to their readers, they sell their readership to their advertisers. The old notion revolved around the quixotic and the dreamer, much like those heroes in John F. Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize book "Profiles in Courage." Today scandal TV thrives because it is commercial, and there is "much more profile than courage."

It is precisely because the standards are so wide-ranging, the goal posts constantly moving, that we must reserve the power finally to censor solely to the courts. It is dangerous to vest that power in private groups accountable to no higher principle, no higher community, whether those with more money (as in the case of advertisers) or more goons (as in the case of warlords and politicians). In theory, the private enforcement of public norms sounds romantic, the self-appointed attorneys-general vindicating the general good. In life, it ratifies unequal access to power and deputizes an unaccountable elite to make moral judgments for others—and that is one reality that "Reality TV" tends to make us forget.

* * *

Comments to raulcp@info.com.ph

The VAT issue minus the gobbledygook

COMMENTARY

Rick M. Abcede

WITH SO many complex, almost esoteric matters drawn into the heated discussion on whether to increase the VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent, laymen get caught in a vortex of figures and arguments raised by economists, lawyers and legislators.

For example, there is disagreement on the figures supplied by the Department of Finance and the computations made by Sen. Ralph Recto. Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima says that increasing the VAT by 12 percent will raise P80 billion, while Recto claims that retaining the 10 percent VAT will raise the same amount if the exemptions will be removed.

There is also the issue of whether to exempt the power sector because a large segment of the population will be affected by a possible increase in the price of electricity. The Senate version prohibits passing the increase to consumers, but how can this be enforced when no power company would admit or make it appear that they have increased electric costs because of the increased VAT? They will find ingenious ways of increasing power costs without attributing the increase to the additional VAT.

The Foundation for Economic Freedom and the UP 11—economists all—cite various defects in the House and Senate versions, while stressing the need for value-added tax reform to save the nation from a looming fiscal crisis.

A recent Social Weather Stations survey says that most of those interviewed are not aware of the complex issues surrounding the debate on the VAT increase. The survey also reveals that most people are in favor of additional taxes provided the government use the proceeds efficiently and that corruption be addressed effectively.

So how does a non-economist or an ordinary folk understand and cross the turbulent waters of VAT discussions and arrive at the port of understanding in ship-shape form? Perhaps common folks like us should just sail far and wide on the winds of common sense alone, utilizing no more than the logic of sidewalk vendors, so we won't drown in the sea of complex arguments and figures that could engulf us.

One thing is clear: We are in debt. We have huge obligations to pay and it doesn't matter now how we incurred such gigantic debt. It is said that this gargantuan debt dates back to Marcos, but that's historical stuff. What matters now is that we must pay this debt without putting a stop to vital projects to boost our economy, attract foreign investments and help our poor in the process. It's either we borrow some more for these programs—education, health and infrastructures, for example—which will only increase our indebtedness and give us more headaches later, or we accept an addition to our consumption tax that will immediately raise the needed revenues to address our present financial woes. Either we swallow the bitter pill now or suffer economic meltdown later.

In the end, VAT is not only about taxation. It is above all about governance. Without funds, all government activities will come to a halt, everything will be in chaos, there can even be food riots in the streets—which the leftist groups opposing the higher VAT really want to happen so they can take over amid the confusion.

If you own a tricycle which you are paying for in monthly installments, and you had to borrow suddenly for a medical emergency, you will find a way to increase your income while paying your installments and at the same time pay what you borrowed for the medical needs of your loved one. It's useless for the moment to blame yourself or your wife for not saving enough to meet unexpected emergencies. You stop talking and walk the talk.

If an airplane is in midair and there's an emergency, the pilot should not be missing from the cockpit just because his license is still being processed. Our legislators, our President, and all those patriotic enough to care enough for our country, should not renege on their duty to do what is supremely needed in this moment of crisis.

Countries like Argentina tell us what could happen if our leaders don't act and act fast: we will be in a mess that leads to an eventual economic collapse. We should dread the occurrence here of the Potato Famine that struck Ireland in the mid-1840s, where one out of every four Irish left their country for the United States. Out of desperation over the fate of their nation, they abandoned it to save themselves.

This is not the time to seek popular acclaim, to grandstand by falsely espousing the cause of the poor, to raise issues about government corruption and inefficiency, blame the present administration for the mess we're in, nitpick on minute details about the VAT bill that will give opportunities for horse-trading or political concessions in return for supporting its passage. Any tax measure is unpopular, but if the need for it is explained to the people, they will understand.

The UP economists make sense when they say that a second bill could be deliberated upon concerning exemptions that could be deleted or restored anytime, provide a de-escalation of the rate when things normalize, discuss the implications of imposing the tax on certain professions or entities, etc. There will be time for all that—including the proposed increase in corporate tax or the exemption of the power sector—because such will need more intensive research, lots of debate and more time for deliberation.

But at the moment, what is needed is to address our nation's fiscal problem in the fastest and easiest way. And that is to raise the VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent. That's the long and short of it, without the economic gobbledygook.

Rick M. Abcede is national chair of the Filipino Lawyers for Good Governance Inc. (Filgood).

Pinay Einstein?

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

LAST January, Harvard president Larry Summers stirred controversy when he tried to explain gender disparities in science, that is, men doing better than women in terms of numbers and occupying high positions.

He gave three possible explanations, which I'm paraphrasing here: (a) women are not as interested as men in sacrificing for high-powered jobs; (b) men have more intrinsic aptitude for high-level science; and (c) women may be victims of discrimination.

Summers suggested that the importance of the explanations "ranks in exactly the order that I just described."

Not surprisingly, the speech drew scathing criticism, including a vote of no-confidence from Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

It's an old stereotype common in Western countries that males are "intrinsically" better at math and science. As "proof," they'll point to scores in the math tests conducted in countries belonging to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), whose membership consists of more than 40 developed countries, where males generally do better than females in math and science tests. Then they'll cite statistics showing that more males than females get doctoral degrees, or occupy top positions in science institutions.

All kinds of explanations have been advanced to explain these differences, mainly centering around brain anatomy and physiology, but these explanations have also been challenged, mainly in the way they suggest a fixed handicap on the part of women. Biologists themselves (perhaps women biologists) say there's more to these gender disparities than the brain.

Motivated Pinay

I've actually never been able to understand the gender stereotypes in the United States and Europe because in all my years of teaching in the Philippines, it's the females who do better than the males.

I've taught only at the college level but results from the National Elementary Achievement Test and the National Secondary Achievement Test, which the Department of Education used to require in all schools, support my observations. A few years back, I was asked to review the statistics and I noticed right away that the females on average did better than males not just in math and science but in all subjects.

It's now the season of graduations and if you look at the coed schools, you'll find more female students running off with honors. At UP Diliman, 7 of the 10 summa cum laudes this year were female. And, mind you, they got their summa cum laude in fields like mathematics and molecular biology.

So, are our women smarter than our men?

Time magazine's March 28, 2005 issue, which had a cover story on the gender gap, described a fishing village in Iceland where the girls did far better than boys with math. The explanation was simple: motivation. The boys dreamt of leaving school so they could go off to the sea. The girls, on the other hand, saw school as a way out of their village, and therefore studied harder.

I'm certain something similar is happening in the Philippines on a national scale. Paradoxically, the motivation comes from a combination of opportunities as well as discrimination. On one hand, there are more job opportunities now for our women, locally as well as overseas. Very early in life, our girls see this and are encouraged to work harder in school.

Discrimination

Ironically, the motivation to do better in school may also come from discrimination. Because males are still more privileged, a girl growing up in a low-income household suffers more from the deprivation and poverty and becomes more determined to finish high school or college, knowing that a diploma may help her to attain a better life.

Even more ironically, gender discrimination in school admissions could push girls to work harder. Medical schools, for example, generally require higher grade point averages for female applicants because they feel that women graduates tend to squander their medical education by getting married and having children. Yet all our medical schools end up admitting many more female students because more of them qualify. Again, this may be because the female undergraduate student vying for medical school will work harder to get a higher grade point average.

Alas, even if our girls excel in schools, out in the real world they still end up trailing behind the men. In the area of science and technology, they often do all the hard work in research but are unable to make their way up through the bureaucratic ladders. Biology may play a role here, but not because of brain differences. Instead, the handicap comes because their careers are interrupted by child-bearing and child-rearing. Let's face it, both in government and private sectors (more so in the latter), employers will be quicker to pass up a woman for promotion because they see her as unreliable, simply because she could get pregnant and would need to go on maternity leave.

Raising Einstein

It's time, too, that we look at how we might be encouraging a gender gap in our schools. Even if the females generally fare better, guidance counselors and parents may subconsciously discourage children from seeking careers in science and engineering, simply because these are seen as male domains. The discrimination could start quite early: I've met many parents who still think those Lego construction toys are meant only for boys.

Think, too, of the way we socialize our sons and daughters. Sons are taught to be aggressive, to fight for their rights. Daughters are taught to be patient, to keep their silence even if they've been treated unfairly. Project several years ahead when they begin to work: that daughter may be brighter than all her male work colleagues but if she's passed up for a grant, or for a promotion, she's likely to just accept the injustice as part of life.

We need to rethink our gender biases, maybe even turning some of our perceptions upside down. For example, we could ask, "If men are supposed to be smarter, why is it that autism and learning disorders are so much more common in males?" Biologically, it may seem that males are actually disadvantaged.

If we were more gender sensitive in schools and at home, will we soon be producing a Pinay Einstein? I doubt it, but it's not because of a gender difference. In the international tests for science and math, both our males and females have fared poorly, close to the bottom of the list. There are serious problems in our educational system that account for this dismal performance. Yes, we are in demand in the world labor market, but for jobs that do not use the full potentials of the Filipino or the Filipina.

Going hungry

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE-THIRD of all Filipinos say they are not getting enough food, a story in yesterday's papers reported, based on the findings of a nationwide survey conducted by Pulse Asia from March 3-16.

The private polling body said the 30 percent hunger figure is even an improvement over findings in October last year, when 43 percent of respondents said they were not getting enough food. This year's survey also found that 29 percent of Filipinos said that "having enough to eat everyday (was) an urgent personal concern" to them. So, aside from the large proportion of Filipinos who already go hungry each day, almost the same number say they worry if they will be able to eat and where and how to get the food they would eat.

If, as social observers note, we Filipinos "move on our stomachs," food serving as not just nutrient and fuel but also as social lubricant and determinant of social status, then this is a matter of grave national concern, indeed.

The picture grows even more alarming when we take into consideration the findings of other research bodies. In the article "Why are Filipinos Hungry?" published in the PCIJ's "i Report," former Agriculture and Trade Undersecretary Ernesto Ordoñez cites five-year findings of the Social Weather Stations, another respected private polling firm, that shows a steady escalation of Filipinos' hunger from 2000 to 2004, "save for a fluke of a year that was 2003 when only 5.1 percent of the respondents told SWS they had gone hungry." But in 2000, the number of respondents who said they had gone hungry was at 8.8 percent, by 2004 the number was at 15.1 percent.

The trend is borne out by the findings of the National Statistics Office. In 2000, the NSO determined that each Filipino needed at least P21 worth of food daily in order to survive. The NSO census of that year found that 21.2 percent of all Filipinos were not reaching even that meager food threshold. Since the government conducts a census only every five years, it's not yet known for sure whether that figure has increased or declined. But, given the recent spate of price hikes from gasoline to power to consumer goods, it may be safe to assume that even more Filipinos are going hungry today.

* * *

ORDOÑEZ cites "three possible reasons for the growing hunger among Filipinos."

These are: food production may not be keeping up with our growing population, "there simply is not enough food"; by the time the food produced at the farm level gets to the consumer, food prices are too high, which means many simply cannot afford the food they need; and third, some cannot purchase the food they need because they have too little income or what income they have for food has largely been eaten up by inflation.

From 1990 to 1999, says Ordoñez, the Philippine population grew at 2.3 percent while agriculture growth averaged only 2.1 percent. "In other words, food production didn't keep up with the growing population." But from 2000 to 2004, notes Ordoñez, agricultural production racked up impressive growth, from 3.6 percent in 2000 to an expected 5 percent in 2004. Why are Filipinos still going hungry?

Ordoñez cites Mario Capanzana, head of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), who reminds that "hunger is not determined by food production alone." Food consumption, he adds, "is also determined by food availability and affordability." By the time agriculture products reach consumers at the retail level, prices would have increased from anywhere between P8 and P56 from the "farmgate" price. But Capanzana notes that the big disparity between farmgate and retail prices has not changed all that much in the last few years, so it cannot be the major cause for the increase in hunger among Filipinos.

Certainly a major factor, says Ordoñez, is the "decrease in purchasing power and with it, the capacity of consumers to buy food." Directly related to this, he adds, is the rate of unemployment and underemployment, "as well as both overall inflation and food inflation."

Making matters worse is "inequitable growth." According to an Asian Development Bank study, from 1985-1997, when the poverty incidence dropped from 44 percent to 33 percent, the poorest 20 percent of the population improved their income by only 0.5 percent for every one-percent growth in average income. "Clearly, we should also work on more equitable distribution of income," says Ordoñez.

* * *

IN THE MEANTIME, families that can still afford to buy food, though among the poor this "quota" has been reduced to just one meal a day, are resorting to the adoption of what marketing guru Ned Roberto calls "surrogate *ulam*" to get by.

Compared to our neighbors (and these include Cambodia and Laos), the Philippines is reducing malnutrition at a much slower pace. While malnutrition and undernutrition reduce the working capacity of adolescents and adults, they affect young children the most and permanently, retarding their growth, making them more prone to illness, and even affecting their mental capacity.

With their purchasing power curtailed, writes Vinia Datinguinoo in the same issue of "i Report," many Filipino families have turned to carbohydrate-heavy diets, the most popular being instant noodles, and salty accompaniments to boiled rice, such as soy sauce, *bagoong* or just salt.

Such coping strategies, say experts at the FNRI, have helped Filipinos maintain their needed caloric levels, but a diet rich in salt and carbohydrates likewise presents the risk of health complications down the road, particularly on such vital organs as the heart and kidneys.

Not only are many Filipinos going hungry, those that manage to eat are, by their choice of food, eating themselves to an early grave.

The courtship of 'Kastila'

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHILE thousands of people go round Elliptical Road in Quezon City every day, they are too preoccupied with staying alive or getting to their destination to notice the Quezon Memorial Shrine in the center of the circle. Restaurants and various stalls have sprouted all over the place over the years making the shrine an isolated island in the center of the circle.

There are differences of opinions regarding the development of this open space in the navel of Quezon City. Should it be an amusement park, or should we create a beautiful but solemn park that underlines the main purpose of the shrine as the place where Manuel Luis Quezon is buried? We hope Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte will implement the master plan that will rationalize the use of the park, draw more people in, and make them remember the life and deeds of Commonwealth President Quezon.

Yesterday, the remains of Aurora Aragon Quezon were transferred from Manila to the Quezon Memorial Shrine. She was murdered by bandits in 1949, an event that shocked the nation. Reading the lurid details in the newspapers of the time will really wind you up, so I decided to find a happier bit of information from my dustbin.

One of my regular Sunday morning phone pals was the late National Artist Honorata "Atang" de la Rama, widow of National Artist Amado V. Hernandez. I first met "Ka Atang" at the launching of a compilation of her husband's poetry. She autographed my book and we did not get to know each other well until I interviewed her for an essay I was writing on Nicanor Abelardo. Our interview went beyond the topic and she had so many anecdotes on other people that I decided to mine her memory for oral history. My one regret was that I did not record the conversations nor did I follow a set plan for interviews.

Once I asked her about a photograph of Amado Hernandez in a huddle with the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre. She simply stated that she did not ask her husband about his business, private or otherwise. As soon as he stepped out the door of their house, she did not care to ask what he did. When I pushed for an answer she said, "*Wala akong pakialam.* When he comes home, he is still my husband! That's why we don't quarrel." She then asked why a young person (I was young once) was so engrossed in the past. "*Para kang nangangalkal ng basura* (It's as if you're rummaging through garbage)," she said. Despite what appeared to be a rebuff, she still came up with a footnote to the love story of Manuel Quezon and Aurora Aragon that is worth repeating here:

"One day while I was rehearsing for a zarzuela, I was told to get ready and go with a man called 'Kastila.' He would be wearing a khaki ensemble, riding breeches [and carrying] a riding whip. Someone else would take my place [and sing my parts] at that night's zarzuela.

"Kastila came on horseback, and since I was small, he placed me in one of the *kaing* on one side of the horse to balance the load of fruits and vegetables on the other side. The trip was long and the man didn't talk much. He knew I was a singer and he asked me to sing as I went along. I did as I was told, *pero nainis ako kasi mainit* (but I was irritated because it was hot)!

"Then we came to a river where a waiting *casco* took us to Baler, Quezon. This part of the trip was more agreeable, because there was a shade and I enjoyed watching the flying fish. The men caught fish which they broiled along with some chickens on board the *casco*. Later they served one *palanggana* of rice and tomatoes to go with the freshly cooked fish. As I was very hungry, *lamon ako nang lamon* (I just kept eating). Water from the river was not good, *matabang ang tubig* (the water tasted flat), so I was given fresh *buko*.

"After a day's journey, we arrived at our destination—a big house in Baler. I was asked if I knew how to play the piano. I was not in the mood, so even if I could play the piano, I told my hosts I only knew how to sing. A guitar player was called in and he asked me what I wanted to sing. I told him I would sing all the songs he could play. You see this was not a problem, since I was very good with *oido* and I could easily pick up a tune. If I didn't know the lyrics, I'd invent them! [laughs] I didn't write stories and zarzuela scripts for nothing you know. You have a lot to learn from your Lola Atang.

"And you know what? My host turned out to be Aurora Aragon, the future wife of Manuel Luis Quezon! I was brought all the way there as part of Quezon's courtship! All the way to sing for his sweetheart! I slept in the Aragon house overnight and the next day, it was the same route back to where the zarzuela company was playing.

"Quezon never brought this up when we met later on. He had married Doña Aurora and was already president when I was invited to sing in Malacañang. You know, I was even present when Quezon signed the law making Tagalog the National Language. I was not paid for singing for Doña Aurora, but who was I to know, at the time, who this 'Kastila' was? How was I to know he would later become president?"

I wish I had asked Manuel "Nonong" Quezon Jr. to confirm the above story, but I was too busy to visit him regularly or chat with him on the phone. He was another source of oral history now lost to us.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

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The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Speedy conviction just for show

JUDGE Pedro Corrales of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court has set a record in the Philippine judiciary by convicting tricycle driver Victor Mallari (for robbing a delegate to the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in Manila) after about eight hours of marathon hearing.

As a lawyer, I would have wished that our courts worked that fast in all cases. I have, however, misgivings about speedy convictions.

Mallari was arrested a day after the incident. He was not caught in "hot pursuit," which would have allowed his arrest without a warrant, and an immediate inquest. He should therefore have been made to undergo preliminary investigation to determine if probable cause really existed against him. The process would have taken a few days, with Mallari presenting countervailing evidence with the assistance of a counsel of his own choice.

Even the filing of information takes no less than a day from the time the inquest prosecutor receives the complaint. The case is then raffled to a judge, who in turn orders the arraignment of the accused on another day. The procedure takes no less than three days—assuming that the judge sets the arraignment the day after receiving the assignment and the accused is duly notified of the date of his arraignment.

During arraignment, the accused may insist on being represented by a lawyer of his own choice. If he has none, the public attorney assigned to the court will have to represent him—for arraignment at the least.

After arraignment, the pre-trial may be terminated, so that the trial or presentation of prosecution evidence can start. The Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure allows the accused at least 15 days to prepare for trial, including the presentation of evidence in his behalf.

A defense counsel worth his salt should at least present the accused as his own witness, if it has no other witness to corroborate his defense. If the lawyer for Mallari waived the presentation of the latter's testimony and other witnesses (for the accused), said counsel might have as well asked his client to plead guilty to dispense with the trial.

Mallari's conviction was obviously for show—for the world to see that our judicial system here works fast. I am afraid, however, that the opposite has been achieved, especially in the minds of civil libertarians here and abroad.

Speedy conviction is a dangerous practice. It violates not only the constitutional presumption of innocence but also the requirements of due process and equal protection of the law. The Constitution demands speedy trial, not speedy conviction.

I totally do not agree with what Mallari had done. But the constitutional rights of the accused, even the apparently guilty, should be respected at all times. Nothing is wrong in showing the world that we respect the rights of even the most wretched, the most odious among us.

—ARCHIMEDES MARQUEZ,
420 Gov. A Pascual St.,
San Jose, Navotas, Metro Manila

Balanced and objective reporting

I WOULD like to acknowledge and commend the INQUIRER's news reporting. It has become objective and balanced.

The newspaper's stand on the population issue is quite clear. However, one can see that it gives those who see the issue from another perspective the opportunity to present their side.

The newspaper should continue to be more open, balanced and unbiased regarding this issue, which I feel should be the aim of good media reporting, and I'm sure it will gain the respect of a wide number of readers.

—SANDRA M. SALARSKI,
120 Lopez Rizal St.,
Mandaluyong City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Milking the corrupt

GRAFT and corruption will always be with us. The reason is simple. The very agencies constitutionally tasked to eradicate the problem are infiltrated by corrupt elements.

Let us take the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit. These offices are infested by corrupt people. A lifestyle check on these officials will certainly prove some of them do indeed have unexplained wealth.

Unfortunately, these super untouchables, who are supposed to check the lifestyle of public officials, are just milking the corrupt in other government offices, thus making the situation doubly serious.

Corrupt officials in the Ombudsman and the COA are known in their respective agencies, but they still can carry on with their nefarious ways without a slap on the wrist. Which creates the suspicion that their chiefs are on the take, too.

I am already a senior citizen, and I feel unfortunate that I will depart from this world without seeing our country graft-free.

—LIGORIO G.M. NAVAL,
114-B Alima,
Bacoor, Cavite

The beginning of life

RECENTLY, in congressional discussions on House bills proposed to address the overpopulation problem vis-à-vis poverty, the congressmen, physicians and resource persons found themselves in disagreement as to when life begins. The question is so fundamental. All pertinent information on the subject should be presented to find the answer and resolve the disagreement.

In 1961, I attended the first lecture of the first contraceptive pill Enovid at the Sheraton Hotel, New York City. An added feature was the lecture on the works done by Hertig and Rock inside a laboratory on the ova of monkeys and humans. It was very revealing.

With the discovery of electron microscopy and molecular biology, it is now possible to distinguish the once unseen structures in the cell, the changes that occur in them and their relation to cell growth, development and reproduction.

In a series of continuous film presentations, it was shown how a sperm containing the genetic elements of a donor male united with an ovum (egg) containing the genetic material from a donor female. In 48 hours, their respective contents mixed and re-arranged themselves into one fertilized cell. The sperm and the egg in effect united and became one fertilized cell containing parts from the donor male and parts from the donor female.

The newly formed cell underwent the same normal process of cell growth and multiplication by cell division, i.e., one cell became two then four, eight, 16 and so on. The combined mass of cells formed the human embryo that attached itself and grew into the uterus.

In two months, the embryo assumed a human form and its heart began to beat. From this stage the fetus continued to grow and develop into a full-term baby.

Laboratory evidence, therefore, exists depicting the origin of human life—from its inception as a fertilized ovum, developing into an embryo, fetus and a full-term baby.

It is true that in the laboratory, only one out of eight embryos succeeded in achieving nidation. The rest were spontaneously aborted due to congenital anomalies or other causes. There is no question as to continuity of life from fertilization up to its normal span.

When does life begin? A highly controversial question! As existing evidence shows, the answer is obvious: "from the time of fertilization." The Philippine Obstetricians-Gynecologists Society Inc., particularly the Committee on Ethics and Medical Practice, subscribes to this altruism, and even the Philippine Constitution has a provision for this.

—DR. SANTIAGO A. DEL ROSARIO,
former president,
Philippine Obstetricians-Gynecologists Society Inc.;
president, Philippine Society of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility

Do MPA members pay taxes?

THIS is regarding the piracy suit filed by the Motion Pictures Association against Destiny Cable. It said that Destiny was airing programs that were not part of any commercial agreement. While the case continues, the MPA allegedly complained to the National Telecommunications Commission to implement sanctions against the cable company.

While I have never condoned piracy and never will, I was taken aback at the MPA's high-handedness.

Apparently organizations like the MPA do not allow themselves to be governed by Philippine laws, yet they whine whenever they think we have offended them. With the money they earn from providing programs for the local cable industry in this country, are they at all paying taxes? Methinks not. And they are first to cry foul over any alleged indiscretion on our part.

I should think we ought to look into legislation that would bind business deals such as this one into paying the appropriate taxes.

Instead of having to raise our taxes, why can't we run after those who have been milking us dry?

—ROMEO Y. LIM,
Jusmag Compound,
Fort Bonifacio, Makati City

Overbearing comrades in arms

THE ARTICLE, "Carmen Rosales, movie queen and war heroine" by Ernie Pecho (PDI, 3/13/05) was an eye-opener and highly informative. However, the author wrote that "Tatlong Maria" was "the only movie produced during the Japanese Occupation." I beg to disagree.

A bigger and more expensive movie, "Dawn of Freedom," was produced in Manila in the latter part of 1942 by Toho Film of Japan, in conjunction with Filipino movie companies. Lengthy portions of the movie were filmed on location in Intramuros, Quiapo, Quezon Boulevard, Bataan, Corregidor and in movie studios in Manila. The principal players were Fernando Poe Sr., Rogelio de la Rosa, Leopoldo Salcedo, Angel Esmeralda, Norma Blancaflor, Rosa Aguirre, Narding Anzures, Tessie Quintana and a host of other Filipinos.

Likewise, many American POWs, with their captured tanks, armored vehicles, trucks, command cars and jeeps, played a significant role in this movie. Officers and soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army, then in active service in the Philippines, were hastily trained into instant actors to play the role of conquerors of Bataan and Corregidor. The dialogue was in Tagalog, English and Niponggo (with English sub-titles).

As one of those who had the opportunity to view "Dawn of Freedom" in 1943, I was thoroughly shocked at the powerful exposé of the brutal ill-treatment of Filipino soldiers—who comprised the majority of fighters in the front lines of Bataan—by extremely arrogant and overbearing American soldiers, most of whom where in the safety of the rear lines and had total control over Filipino soldiers, munitions and all food supplies.

I recall that most of us, during the Japanese occupation, dismissed "Dawn of Freedom" as naked enemy propaganda. Of course, then unknown to the civilian population was the stark reality of Filipino frontline soldiers fed with "one can of salmon and two *gantas* of rice per 30 men twice a day only," while the Americans, safe in the rear, ate full daily rations!

This inevitably resulted into a full-blown hostility between Filipino and American soldiers in Bataan and caused President Manuel L. Quezon in Corregidor to explode in typical "Quezonian fury" at the "*Sinverguenza*" Americans. He quickly sent a radio message to the US president in Washington, D.C. and demanded that the United States immediately recognize Philippine independence so that Quezon could swiftly declare it a neutral country.

With such suggestion, Quezon thought he could order the immediate withdrawal of American and Japanese forces in the Philippines, thereby saving his countrymen from further humiliation, destruction and death. (See John Toland, "But Not In Shame.") Here lies the greatness of President Quezon.

The hostility between Filipino and American soldiers in Bataan, as exposed in the movie, "Dawn of Freedom," was not without basis.

—DANIEL H. DIZON,
War History Club of Angeles,
Villa Gloria, Angeles City 2009.

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Question of the Week

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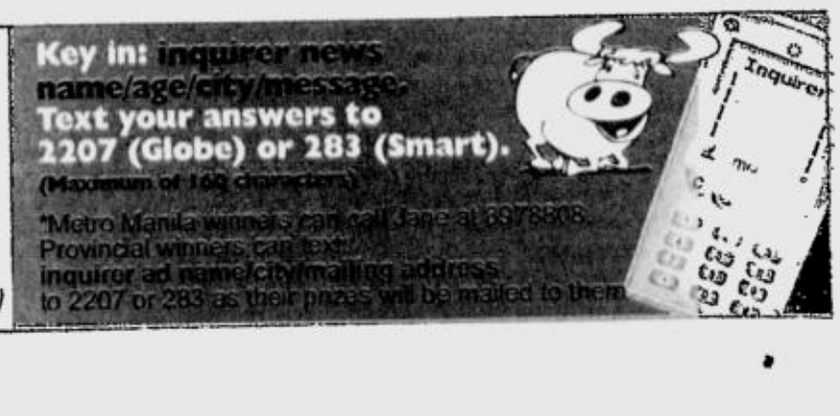
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wiL each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! Ü*



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Sultan Kudarat illegal logging resumes

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Environmental groups in Sultan Kudarat are alarmed over the reported resumption of illegal logging activities in the province.

Col. Alfredo Dagudag, Task Force Kalikasan chief, said they will investigate a report which implicated some local officials and personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Mindanao.

"We will give these local officials and DENR personnel the benefit of a doubt since we still have to gather information and evidence to identify who are the real culprits behind the illegal logging operations in the area," Dagudag said.

Col. Jerry Jalandoni, commanding officer of the 604th Army Brigade based in Barangay Kalandagan, Tacurong City, said 18 persons, including two barangay chairs and top DENR officials, are reportedly involved in the illegal logging operation.

Jalandoni issued this statement after the military intercepted some 60,000 board feet of lumber in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato.

Early this month, the military's 7th Infantry Battalion, led by Lt. Col. Rafael Valencia, seized two truckloads of freshly-sawn lumber estimated at 25,000 board feet in Barangay Kalibuhan in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat.

He said the lumber, aboard two 10-wheel trucks, were about to be delivered to a lumberyard based in Koronadal City.

The confiscation of the lumber led to the apprehension of another haul estimated at 35,000 board feet in Barangay Kalibuhan. It is allegedly under the care of a certain Antonio Flores.

Jalandoni said they found that the lumber were from Sitio Seven Lakes in Barangay Ned, Lake Sebu, and identified Ned barangay chair Jimmy Lanzarote and Kalibuhan barangay chair Abdila Yusop as the alleged owners. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

CATCHING UP. Former general Victor Corpus poses with trees in a Manila park. His job is now to reforest the country's mountains. ROMEO GACAD/AFP

ROUNDUP

2 Sayyaf men slain

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Two alleged leaders of factions of the Abu Sayyaf were killed in a clash with government soldiers in Barangay Darayan, Patikul, Sulu on Tuesday. But Col. Juancho Sabban, the 3rd Marine Brigade commander, refused to reveal the identities of the slain Abu Sayyaf leaders, saying it might jeopardize the ongoing operations against Radulan Sahiron, the group's leader in Sulu. "Our troops are still in the area, we just temporarily halted it Wednesday when a woman civilian was almost hit in a crossfire," Sabban told the INQUIRER. Patikul Mayor Sakim Suhurin said he was giving full support to the military offensive "because my dream is to weed out lawless elements in my town." Suhurin said as long as the Abu Sayyaf operates in Patikul "it's always the innocent civilian who will be affected." *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPA denies casualties

CITY OF MALOLOS—The New People's Army in Bulacan has denied military reports that six rebels had been killed in Sunday's clash with soldiers in San Miguel town. In a two-page statement sent to the INQUIRER on Wednesday, the NPA's guerrilla committee for operations in Bulacan said no rebel was killed but some were wounded during the clash in Barangay Balaong in San Miguel. Reports from the Army's 7th Infantry Division on Sunday said at least six rebels were killed in the encounter. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Fire damages market

TAGBILARAN CITY—Fire believed caused by faulty wiring destroyed a portion of the public market in Calape, Bohol on Tuesday and wrought damage to buildings and property amounting to P15 million. There were no casualties reported in the 30-minute fire that broke out about 7:15 p.m. at the town market, about 42 km north of this city. Provincial Fire Marshal Nonilo Acero said two firemen—SFO1 Felipe Bitoy and SFO2 Paulino Parsacala—suffered minor injuries. Acero said the fire, which destroyed two stalls and a portion of an expansion building, was believed to have started in a store that operated an electric grinding mill. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

'Net cafe regulation sought

BAGUIO CITY—A councilor here has proposed an ordinance that would monitor and regulate Internet cafes to prevent the operation of cyber sex dens in the city. Councilor Leandro Yangot, the proposed ordinance's author, said he filed the proposal following reports that several Internet cafes in Metro Manila and other major cities in the country have been found to be fronts for cyber sex operations that employ young women, many of them minors. Yangot said the anti-cyber sex den task force, composed of social workers, the police and government and private sector representatives, will be created to monitor the operations of Internet cafes and computer shops in the city. *Hannah Calub, PDI Northern Luzon*

Germany projects done

INFANTA, Quezon—The German government, led by Ambassador Dr. Axel Welshaupt, through the German Development Cooperation (GTZ), commences the rehabilitation of Quezon province as it entrusted its accomplished projects in the area. A total of P10 million was spent for the various projects in Quezon—development of the Paaralang Elementarya ng PICAB; construction of Water Pump Station No. 1; construction of two-story multi-purpose hall; rehabilitation of Lual Elementary School and construction of Spring Development Systems in Real, Quezon.

Iggy denies tax evasion

BACOLOD CITY—Negros Occidental Rep Ignacio Arroyo Jr. has described as "old and rehashed issue" the move of an anti-graft lawyers group to investigate him for alleged tax evasion. "This is an old issue that has been resolved a long time ago," he told the INQUIRER. But he maintained that he would welcome any investigation by the Bureau of Internal Revenue or any plan to file charges against him because "I have nothing to hide." *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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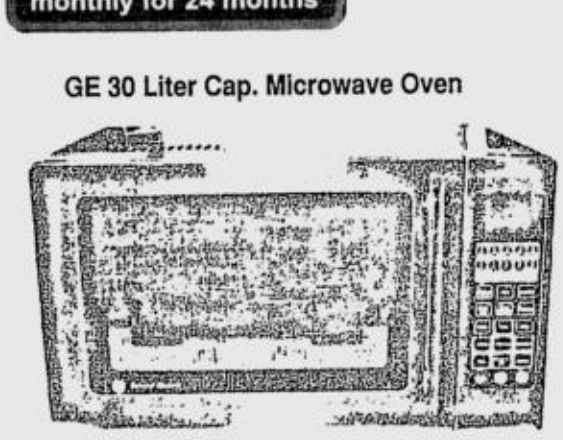

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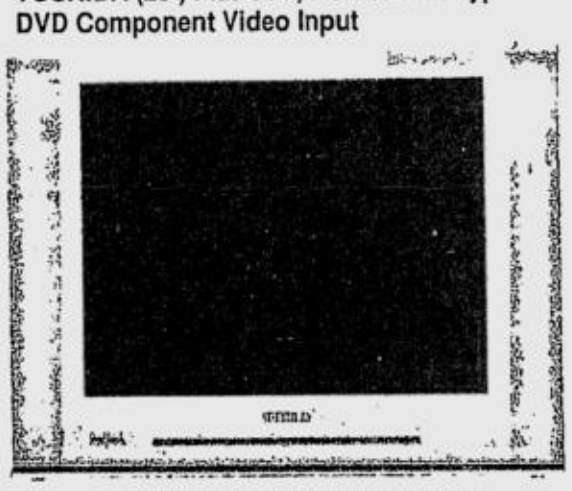

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US official to tell 9/11 stories in Basilan

ISABELA CITY—A top US embassy official would meet with children and wives of former Abu Sayyaf and Moro National Liberation Front members to "tell them stories," a US Army spokesperson said.

Joseph Mussomeli, US charge d' affairs, will "do a story-telling (session)" for some 300 children and wives of former members of the armed groups.

"He will read a story about children's hope by Andrea Patel," said Lt. Col. Jacqueline Lyons, public affairs officer of the US Army Assistance Group in the Philippines.

Patel is author of "On that Day: A book of Hope for Children."

Lyons said the book narrates the hopes of American children before and after the terrorist attack on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

Mussomeli's visit here is in connection with the closing rites for the three-week RP-US Balance Piston 05-3 exercise.

The exercise was participated in by soldiers from the Philippine Army's 55th and 32nd Infantry Battalions.

Elisa del Puerto, manager of the Christian Children's Fund based here, told the INQUIRER that the US military did not only focus on military exercises but also on "touching the lives of the poor people, especially the children."

Since Balance Piston started April 5, Del Puerto said American soldiers were also active at extending humanitarian assistance centered on children and parents.

"What we like most is the story telling they are doing to our children. Such simple activity has touched so many people's hearts, especially the kids, we like to do more of that activity in our program," Del Puerto said.

Maj. Robert Ball, mission commander of Balance Piston 05-3, said the non-military activities have earned them support from the residents.

"With the overwhelming support we get from the folks here, we could confidently say that they, too, provided security to our guys here," Ball said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

AMMUNITION
Residents of Barangay Balaong in San Miguel, Bulacan find themselves amidst government soldiers who were in pursuit of communist guerrillas following a clash and a guerrilla attack on an Army detachment. JOAN BONDOC

Execs say ARMM 'state of health' worst in RP

DAVAO CITY—Children in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) are dying young, and the region's "state of health" is the country's worst, officials said.

Forty-one out of 1,000 children in the ARMM die at birth, and 72 of 1,000 children in the region "die before their fifth birthday."

The region's five provinces—Basilan, Lanao Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi—are among the country's poorest.

Most observers have blamed this on the perennial peace and order problem in most parts of the region.

Dr. Elizabeth A. Samama, representing ARMM Health Secretary Lampa Pandi, said the most common causes of infant deaths in the region are pneumonia, diarrhea, tetanus, prematurity and "congenital anomalies" (abnormality).

Most of these diseases are considered preventable.

Dr. Tahir Sulaik, Maguindanao integrated provincial health office (IPHO) chief, said health programs hardly receive enough support from the regional and national governments, adding that much of the province's limited health care support fund comes from the office of Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr., and "some from foreign sources."

If health statistics were to gauge human progress, the government's purposes of attaining development through devolution of powers have instead failed the health sector, by causing resources to "dwindle," Sulaik said.

Records show that only 21.7 percent of births in the region are attended by either a doctor, nurse or midwife. The figure is less than half the national level at 59.8 percent.

Aside from limited financial resources barely enough to pay salaries and allowances of personnel and volunteers, high paying job placements abroad tend to grab much human resources from rural health services.

Samama said ARMM children are also threatened with tuberculosis and other illnesses, including anemia.

The region's health service records last year also noted a high rate of birth-related deaths at 320 per 100,000 deliveries. The national rate is 180 per 100,000 deliveries.

Health officials said this deplorable state of health in the ARMM was largely due to worsening poverty; lower literacy rate; armed conflict; weak health sector; lack of or lesser health financing programs, and limited infrastructure.

With the data presented before local government executives, Maguindanao executives agreed to provide or increase local support funds for rural health programs. *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

STI: Preparing Students for Real Life

One of the main roles of education is to prepare an individual for life. Education provides an individual the foundation to face the challenges of life and be able to adapt to real-life situations. And one of the very first tests of a good education is being able to apply what one learns in school in the work environment.

As a pioneer in modern education and now the Philippines' largest network of colleges, STI has been known to provide practical and real-life education for 22 years now. Its unique academic system reflects its mission to develop individuals to become productive and valuable members of society.

Through its complete human resource development approach to education, STI makes sure that its graduates are well prepared to face the challenges that may come their way in work and in life.

STI's *"Education for Real Life"*, in essence, allow students to learn practical skills and useful knowledge which they can easily apply in real-life situations. This is because STI's curriculum is designed by industry practitioners to ensure that what the students learn is aligned with industry needs and trends. To make learning effective, lessons are delivered only by accredited faculty members.

Another important factor in STI's academic delivery system is the modern facilities of STI campuses. More than the usual blackboards and chalk method, STI students get to learn in a more interactive process using the latest tools in ICT-enhanced education. STI's modern facilities provide a conducive learning environment so that professors can focus on teaching and students can concentrate on learning.

By actually understanding and realizing how technology really works and what makes it relevant to different professions, STI graduates get properly "acclimatized" to the existing standards and practices used in various industries.

Soon, STI plans to implement Operation Spoken English Environment Program (OSEEP) in its campuses nationwide to help students develop better English-speaking capabilities through practice. Again, this is in response to a real-life need – the need for English proficiency in the global economy.

Real-life education is what STI provides its students. After all, education is about preparing individuals to succeed in a journey called life.

TAKING CARE OF STUDENTS FROM ENROLLMENT TO EMPLOYMENT

In line with its commitment to provide real-life education, STI introduced starting last year a unique human resource value chain called Enrollment to Employment System or E2E System- a system that provides students applicable education, job market skills, job preparedness, and job placement assistance.

As the name implies, the E2E system provides a complete set of services to its students, from the time they enroll in college up to the time they look for a job.

To ensure that this promise is adequately met, STI first entered into an agreement with international consulting firm Universal Workers Inc., a training and review company that provides healthcare workers and other professionals with advanced skills, to make them more competitive in the global market.

STI then entered into an agreement with Global Resource for Outsourced Workers (GROW), the premiere overseas recruitment and staffing agency in the Philippines today, to allow STI to assist qualified graduates get rewarding jobs here and abroad. Thanks to its partnership with GROW, STI graduates will soon be given an opportunity to work in some of the major institutions affiliated with GROW. Today, GROW is eyeing to supply more than 1,000 workers each year as part of its E2E recruitment efforts.

PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES FOR COLLEGE

Aside from taking care of its graduates in college, STI has also come up with a program that would help improve the chances of high school graduates in coping and performing well for their tertiary education. The same entailed subjecting the students in actual, real-life situations in college so they'd be better prepared.

STI is thus inviting high school students to join "Career Factor", a college preparatory training program that is offered for FREE; regardless of the school or course that one chooses after graduation.

It is also one of the many efforts of STI in line with its commitment to help uplift the standard of education for the Filipino youth, and may be considered as a vital cog in the education institution's desire to help make them become productive members of society.

Career Factor is designed to be a learning adventure that's full of fun challenges, self-discovery, total participation and interactive games for graduating high school students. Based on their respective skills and competencies, the program is envisioned to help the students decide on which particular course to take in college.

Among the featured activities in Career Factor are role-playing, observation, mental imagery, writing tasks, projects and simulations. Given all these, one gets a feeling that whichever course one takes in college this school year, one is assured that whatever skills learned in Career Factor may immediately be applied in real life situations.

Various programs for Career Factor are now ongoing at STI campuses nationwide. For more information, please call Ms. Bang Lawag or Ms. Fiona Lota at 891-3793. You may also visit www.sti.edu.

TOP PHOTO:
A bastion of academic excellence and ICT-enhanced education, STI remains steadfast in its commitment to help uplift the country's standard of education for the Filipino youth.

MIDDLE PHOTO:
STI's nursing skills laboratory within the campus simulates actual hospital settings.

LAST PHOTO:
STI's fully-equipped Science and Engineering laboratories provide students with a unique learning experience.

CHED GRANTS PERMIT TO 15 STI COLLEGES FOR BS NURSING COURSE

The Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) recently gave STI, the Philippines' largest network of colleges, the thumbs up sign to offer nursing courses in 15 of its campuses; this, while at the same time giving 5 of its other nursing schools provisional permits. STI's top executives hailed this development as a fitting testament to the educational institution's transformation as a full-fledged college offering a broad spectrum of courses.

As of November 8, 2004, the following nursing colleges of STI were given regular permits: Makati (Permit No. C-160 S-2004), Recto (Permit No. C-159 S-2004), Fairview (Permit No. C-161 S-2004), Las Piñas (Permit No. C-078 S-2004), Meycauayan (Permit No. HET 079 S-2004), Sta. Maria (Permit No. HET-082 S-2004), Baguio (Permit No. 045 S-2004), Calamba (Permit No. 184 S-2004), Sta. Cruz (Permit No. 174 S-2004), San Pablo (Permit No. 183 S-2004), Lucena (Permit No. 175 S-2004), Rosario (Permit No. 170 S-2004), Southwoods (Permit No. 199 S-2004), Cagayan de Oro (Permit No. 049 S-2004), and Davao (Permit No. 050 S-2004).

Five other STI schools, meanwhile, were given provisional permits. They are: Cebu (Temporary Permit No. 073 S-2004), Cubao (Provisional Permit No. 008 S-2004), Global City (Provisional Permit No. 009 S-2004), Muñoz-EDSA (Provisional Permit No. 019 S-2004) and Quezon Avenue (Provisional Permit No. 017 S-2004).

In response to a recent directive from CHEd calling on schools to improve the quality of nursing education in the Philippines, STI began a major retooling program for its students to help ensure the quality of its graduates. One of these is the creation of a unique, IT-based curriculum that would incorporate the latest trends in technology with the skills needed to become an effective healthcare practitioner.

STI has also put up state-of-the-art nursing skills laboratories in all campuses offering nursing that were designed to simulate the actual hospital setting. Combined with STI's unique education and job placement system (through the E2E system), its students will soon be equipped with ICT-enhanced nursing programs that will enable them to acquire up-to-date skills as required by various healthcare institutions worldwide.

Finally, with STI's global outlook and strong ICT skills content, its nursing graduates are also expected to fare well not only in the local arena, but more so abroad. After all, STI commits itself to the effective, responsive and professional education of its students.

Although it may be argued that STI is still regarded primarily as an IT school, it can be noted that the education institution has already been offering nursing courses for more than 30 years now through its partner, Delos Santos-STI College of Health Professionals, Inc.

"After all, ICT has already become a vital cog of the medical field that you can't have one without the other. For instance, you will no longer see nurses in the U.S. jotting down patient information using metal patient charts. What they use now are handheld PCs to make documentation faster and more efficient," shares Mr. Monico Jacob, President and CEO of the STI Education Services Group.

According to Mr. Jacob, STI spent over P100 million in putting up its nursing facilities and hiring of faculty members in all of STI's nursing colleges nationwide. *"We have been fully cooperating with the Commission (CHEd) and we strongly support their efforts to improve the quality of nursing education in the country."*

Man draws 40-yr jail term for daughter's rape, slay

BACOLOD CITY—A 41-year-old farmer from Sipalay City in Negros Occidental was sentenced to 40 years in prison for beheading his 13-year-old daughter, whom he was also believed to have raped.

Kabankalan Regional Trial Court Judge Henry Arles meted the prison term on Enrique Cabasa Flores on Tuesday after finding him guilty of parricide. Flores was ordered to indemnify his family in the amount of P125,000.

Flores was also charged with rape but the court said that while there was evidence that the girl was raped, it could not conclude with "moral certainty" that it was the father who sexually molested the girl.

The prosecution earlier claimed that on July 31, 1999 Flores, then 35, fetched his daughter from a house where she was staying in Sipalay, dragged her into a field of wild banana plants and raped her. After raping her, he hacked her with a bolo, cutting her neck and inflicting a gaping wound in her arm, the prosecution added.

When he got home on the afternoon of July 31, 1999, he told his wife that he arrived ahead of his daughter because she walked slowly. The victim's body was found on Aug. 3, 1999, half naked and her neck cut, the prosecution said.

Flores denied the charges against him, saying he could not rape and kill his daughter, the eldest of six children.

The judge, however, took cognizance of the testimony of witnesses who saw Flores dragging his daughter into the field of wild bananas.

The judge said Flores could not also explain why his daughter got lost and was later found killed. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Solons, coco groups rue 'brave' Yorac exit

From page A1

protect the interest of coconut farmers and prevent the dilution of their shares in San Miguel Corp.

"I think in all honesty that she was subjected to a lot of pressure that she could not give way to... In other words, it was a choice between her giving in or standing up for her principles. I think she chose the latter," Pimentel added.

Magsaysay said Yorac was "one of the few personalities in the country who have been accorded the highest trust and respect by the Filipino people."

He expressed gratitude for her presence at the two hearings conducted by his committee on agriculture and food on the controversial P8.4-billion hybrid coconut plantation in Agusan del Sur.

Evangeline Valbuena, resigned chief of the Philippine Coconut Authority, blew the whistle on the government's plan to bankroll the project using coconut levy funds. But agriculture officials have maintained that this had yet to be approved.

After four years as PCGG chair, Yorac, 64, has quit her post effective April 30. She squelched speculation that Malacañang had pressured her to quit, saying that she wanted to "rest for a while" and later return to law practice.

But a lawyer-friend of hers said Malacañang officials had asked her to step down in view of her vigorous opposition to the sale of the government shares in SMC.

Another headache

Sen. Joker Arroyo said President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration, which is saddled with domestic problems and is being buffeted by corruption allegations, had just gotten itself another headache by accepting Yorac's resignation.

"It is ill-timed," he said. "With all the problems Malacañang has now, I don't know why it would add another problem."

The senator further said Yorac's resignation could not be separated from her opposition to the government's plan to sell its shares in SMC. "All these are intertwined," he said.

But Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said Yorac "deserved to rest," and pointed out that the government could not rely on a single person to carry out its goals.

"In government, there's no indispensable position. If a government depends on a single person for it to operate efficiently, it has no business to be in government," he told reporters.

Pimentel said Yorac's resignation highlighted the emerging trend of whistle-blowers on government malfeasance "not being appreciated."

"It's an oppressive government which does not seem to care about the niceties of the law," he said.

But Enrile dared Yorac to disclose if she had indeed been pressured to quit her post, saying that only she could explain her reasons for resigning.

Sacrifice

Party-list Representatives Etta Rosales of Akbayan and Satur Ocampo of Bayan Muna said Yorac's resignation had again proved that "responsibility to public interest" was sacrificed on the altar of political convenience.

Rosales and Ocampo said in separate press conferences at the House that Yorac's leaving the PCGG marked a drastic setback in government efforts to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Both said the Arroyo administration, and not Yorac, was the loser in this case.

Rosales called Yorac "a partner in this age of crisis in governance" and "a brave fighter" belonging to "a rare breed."

"We can't afford to lose brave people like Haydee Yorac," Rosales said. "The government can no longer afford to lose them. Haydee is not just competent, she [also] has integrity. That's rare. People with integrity in government are already an endangered species. They're resigning, or being eased out."

Thorn in the flesh

Ocampo said Yorac was "a straight implementer of the law and a stickler for honesty and integrity."

He said that while Yorac was the biggest thing to ever happen to the PCGG, she was perceived as a "thorn in the flesh and a burden to those who have a hidden agenda on the Marcos wealth."

According to Ocampo, the only logical conclusion is that Malacañang and SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco had forged a deal on the government's shares in the food and beverage conglomerate, but Yorac was preventing it from being brought to fruition.

"[It all] now depends on how Attorney Sabio will continue all the advances that Haydee has accomplished, particularly on the Marcos wealth and the rights of coconut farmers to the coconut levy funds," Ocampo said.

He was referring to PCGG Commissioner Camilo Sabio, a former president of the Philippine Constitution Association, who will replace Yorac.

Rep. Rafael Mariano of the party-list group Anakpawis challenged Sabio to uphold and protect the interest of the small coconut farmers.

"The pressure against Yorac forms part of the evil machinations of Danding and Malacañang to smoothen and fully realize their deal. Yorac is the biggest stumbling block to the deal mainly due to her consistent legal position that the coconut levy funds are public funds," said Mariano, principal author of a House bill that seeks to create a "genuine trust fund for small coconut farmers."

No one left

The Coconut Industry Reform Movement Inc., Coconut Industry Reform Movement Inc., Philippine Ecumenical Action for Community Empowerment Foundation Inc. (Peace Foundation), and Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (Pakisama) said in separate statements that Yorac's resignation was a big loss to the small coconut farmers.

"There is no one left to guard the coconut levy [funds]. Who will now oppose the negotiated deal with Cojuangco with Yorac gone?" Peace Foundation executive director Steve Quiambao said at a press briefing.

Real cause?

The militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) wondered what was the real cause of Yorac's resignation.

Willy Marbella, KMP internal deputy secretary general, said: "This is extremely alarming because with Yorac's resignation, Malacañang will basically have a free hand on what to do with the coconut levy funds, as well as the Marcos ill-gotten wealth." *With a report from Christine Gaylican*

Yorac: Don't sell SMC shares yet

By Alcuin Papa

HAYDEE YORAC yesterday advised the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo not to sell or at least to postpone the sale of its stake in food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. while cases related to the shares were pending.

In an interview over radio dzMM, the outgoing chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government said she had received information that the government shares in SMC would eventually be sold at low prices.

Yorac also said that once the courts give a final decision on the coconut levy funds, "the money should be used for [the small coconut farmers'] benefits, for their insurance, and the development of the coconut industry."

Earlier, Yorac had expressed the view that if the government were to dispose of the shares, these should be sold at a premium price.

The government holds a 27-percent stake in SMC. The

YORAC

courts are determining whether coconut levy funds were used to buy the now sequestered shares.

In the same interview, Yorac called on Malacañang to bring the case of the coconut levy funds to its logical conclusion. She said the case was nearing conclusion except for some "technical points."

"I just want them to keep a close watch on the case since a final ruling could be at hand," she said, adding that after the ruling from the Sandiganbayan, the case would be submitted to the Supreme Court for final decision.

Recently, the Sandiganbayan upheld the government's majority ownership of United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB) and the coconut farmers' right to 27 percent of stocks in SMC, both of which were previously held by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Cojuangco had insisted that the money he used to buy into SMC was his own. But earlier reports said the money was actually a "loan" granted by UCPB.

After the 1986 Edsa revolution, these shares were sequestered by the Aquino administration because these were thought to be "ill-gotten."

Cojuangco regained his hold on SMC after President Joseph Estrada's election in July 1998.

The battle for the coconut levy funds remains unresolved almost three decades after the levy was imposed in 1973 by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos on coconut farmers.

Controversial . . .

From page A1

ed Joseph Mussomeli, the current charge d'affaires at the US Embassy in Manila, to be Washington's next ambassador to Cambodia, according to US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelley.

In a statement read by Kelley in his behalf, Mussomeli said learning about his new assignment was a piece of "bittersweet news."

"It is an honor to serve my country in any capacity anywhere. I'm especially honored to be nominated as ambassador to Cambodia but nevertheless, this news is bittersweet since it means I will have to leave the Philippines.

MUSSOMELI: Bittersweet news

At home in RP

"I feel nowhere so at home as here and it will be difficult for my wife Sharon and I to leave Manila even under such happy circumstances," said the outgoing envoy.

Mussomeli is packing his bags weeks after the Philippine government admonished him for the "Afghanistan" remark, which he made in an Australian TV interview on April 5.

He had refused to apologize, saying that the press had taken his remarks out of context and that he never criticized the Philippine government or its people.

This even after the Department of Foreign Affairs handed him a note verbale on April 12, calling his remarks "grossly inaccurate, patently unfair, prejudicial and counterproductive to the overall efforts of the Philippine government to fight terrorism and to bring peace and development in Mindanao."

Entering the US foreign service in 1980, Mussomeli was posted to Manila as charge d'affaires on Aug. 5, 2002. The New Yorker had previously served in the Philippines as a consular officer from 1984 to 1986.

No connection

Told that Filipinos would no doubt link Mussomeli's new assignment to his controversial statements, Kelley said yesterday "there's no connection."

Kelly declined to give a timetable for the transfer of Mussomeli to Cambodia, explaining that his newly earned nomination was still subject to confirmation by the US Senate.

The White House website yesterday carried the announcement of his nomination and those of seven other individuals getting new posts in the Bush administration.

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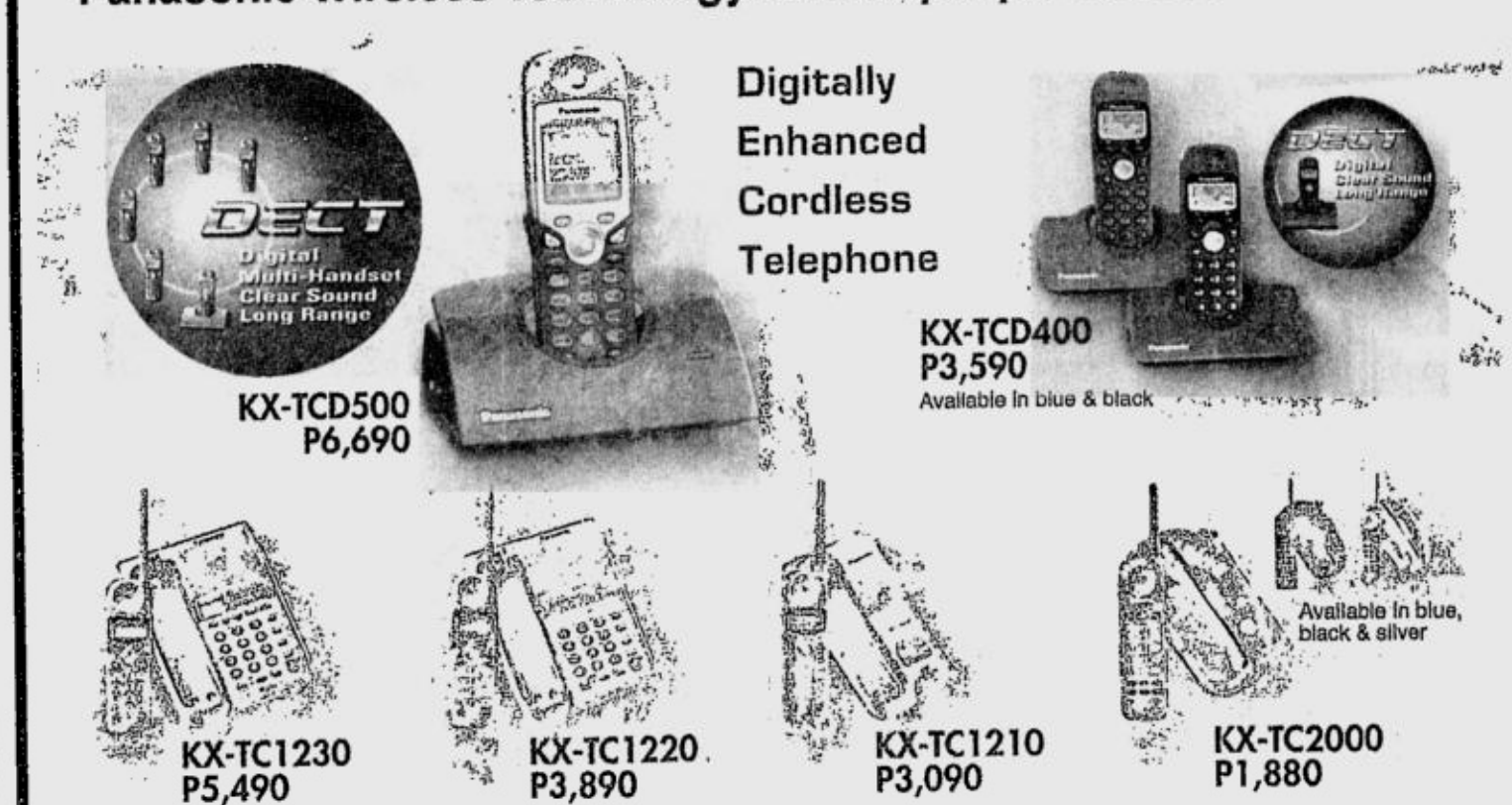

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300 set to attend Asean assembly

MORE than 300 international participants will convene in Manila for the fourth Asean People's Assembly (APA) from May 11 to 13 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

An initiative of the Asean Institute of Strategic and International Studies (Asean-ISIS), the assembly will have for this year the theme "Toward a People-Centered Development in the Asean Community. The meeting will try to put more people-oriented policies to commitments made by member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in such agreements as the Vision 2020, Hanoi Plan of Action and the Bali Concord II, which promises to establish three closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing pillars on political and security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation.

In this year's APA, new panels on security sector reform, indigenous peoples, and children's issues will be included. There will also be updates on its initiatives such as the "scorecards" on human rights, democratization and gender mainstreaming in Southeast Asia.

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10,000 bulbs light up Ho's Jumbo restaurant

From page A1

face-to-face with a replica of a Chinese emperor's chair flanked by two smaller versions.

Glass balls as big as a child's fist dangle from the huge chandeliers.

Golden dragons of various sizes adorn the stairways and handrails. The same dragon motif shows up again on the wall reliefs and dividers.

Welcome to the $600-million Jumbo Kingdom, Manila's newest tourist attraction, a glass-encased floating restaurant anchored in Manila Bay off the Cultural Center complex that had its grand opening last night.

Its publicist describes the Jumbo Kingdom as a restaurant of authentic Chinese dishes, offering a taste of Hong Kong in Manila, harbor views and dancing on the upper deck.

Not exactly new

In truth, it is hardly new, being the latest incarnation of the controversial, mothballed Jumbo Palace Floating Restaurant of Macau gambling kingpin Stanley Ho.

Despite official denials from the state-run gambling firm, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., rumors persist that Ho is behind the re-opening of the Jumbo floating restaurant.

Pagcor and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza have both said Jumbo Kingdom has obtained a license for a restaurant only.

Ho had brought the restaurant ship over from Hong Kong on New Year's Eve in 2000, hoping to make it the flagship of an expanding gambling business in the Philippines.

Protests

The Jumbo Palace remained docked in Manila Bay as Church and civic groups denounced it as a front for gambling, and green groups protested the environmental hazard posed by a restaurant ship disgorging its wastes into the bay.

A year later, Ho's plans for the Jumbo Palace floundered when then President Estrada, whose crony and suspected dummy, Dante Tan, had partnered with Ho, was ousted from power.

The restaurant ship suffered more losses when fire gutted its companion four-story kitchen barge. But the setbacks would not deter the investors who have now apparently successfully refloated Ho's folly.

Two years ago, Peter Lee, proprietor of the Hong Kong Tea House in Ermita, and Hong Kong-based businessman Robert Wong tried to charter the floating restaurant and its kitchen barge from Gold Carousel Investment Ltd., which owns the structure.

'Unseen group'

The contract would have allowed Lee and Wong to operate the floating restaurant for a monthly rental of $85,000, with a two-month advance payment of $170,000.

The contract also said that as charterers, Lee and Wong were required to give Gold Carousel $175,000 in security deposit for "the use of the vessel's premises, including all facilities and equipment."

Any damage, breakage or losses caused by the charterers would be deducted from the deposit, and the rest refunded without interest at the expiry of the contract.

But Lee said the contract was never finalized because another group beat them to it. He said he tried to see Ho in Hong Kong, but an "unseen group" claiming "close ties" to the gambling kingpin blocked his way.

Early this year, Lee heard that the floating restaurant would open sometime in the summer.

"My heart fell, but if it's not for me, it's not for me," he said.

50 chefs

According to its publicist, Jumbo Kingdom offers a range of Chinese dishes, from very simple siomai and pancit to the most elaborate lauriat prepared by "50 chefs and cooks." Of the 50 chefs, four are executive chefs from Hong Kong.

STANLEY HO: Is he or isn't he?

The kitchen has the support of 170 waiters, waitresses and usherettes who don the traditional Chinese floor-length cheongsam with the slit that goes up to mid-thigh.

"The food and the interiors had to be consistent with the standard set by Jumbo Kingdom in Hong Kong," the publicist said.

The restaurants will be open from 11:30 a. m. to 3 p. m. for set lunch, and from 5:30 p. m. to 11:30 p.m. for set dinner. The ballroom on the upper deck will stay open until midnight.

Food, food, food

In fact, it will be "food, food, food" from the first to third floor, according to the publicist in an effort to debunk the rumors that the restaurant was just a "front" for a casino.

The upper deck consists of a bar and ballroom, which is linked to a smaller restaurant.

The open deck is also available for dining, upon request.

Late Wednesday when this reporter visited, workers could be seen rushing to apply a final coat of paint to the Jumbo Kingdom.

Two men were hurriedly giving a shiny coat of maroon paint to the metal gangplank, a very poor cousin to the white marble front steps of the floating restaurant.

No jurisdiction dispute

Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad, meanwhile, said the city was not in dispute with the Manila city government over which had jurisdiction over the floating restaurant.

"The restaurant is within the jurisdiction of Manila although one has to pass through Pasay to get there," said Trinidad, following reports that the permits and licensing office was suing Jumbo Kingdom for not seeking business permits from Pasay.

Trinidad said the city would intervene only if the floating restaurant were to decide to use a nearby Pasay street as parking space for its patrons.

"We would then have to impose Pasay's parking code," he said. *With a report from Fran Katigbak*

Doña . . .

From page A1

rites. She conferred upon Doña Aurora a posthumous Order of Gabriela Silang, an honor given to the spouses of heads of state.

The award was received by the last surviving Quezon child, Zenaida "Nini" Q. Avanceña.

'Ecstatic'

Avanceña, 84, was "ecstatic" about her parents' reunification, said her son Ricky.

"In her lifetime, at least she was able to put (her parents) together," he said.

Ricky said it was his mother who first broached the idea to the National Historical Institute to bring Quezon and Doña Aurora together.

Whenever the family visited the Quezon Shrine on All Souls' Day, they had felt that Quezon was "always alone" inside the mausoleum, he said.

They felt the same thing when they went to visit Doña Aurora at the North Cemetery with the rest of the Quezon clan, he said.

Emotional moment

Seeing Doña Aurora's remains inside a small wooden box being placed into a black granite crypt a few feet from Quezon's own crypt was "an emotional moment," said Ricky, who never met his grandparents.

"It would have been what (my grandparents) would have wanted. I'm very happy for them," said Manuel L. Quezon III, son of the late Manuel Quezon Jr. and an INQUIRER columnist.

Doña Aurora's remains were brought to the shrine after a motorcade from the Manila North Cemetery to the Sto. Domingo Church for Mass, and from the church to the shrine.

Flags at half-staff

President Arroyo ordered flags to be flown at half-staff in Manila, Quezon City, Aurora and Quezon provinces to mark the occasion.

Quezon had been interred at the North Cemetery before his remains were transferred to the shrine on Aug. 19, 1979, his 101st birthday (not 1978 as earlier reported).

President Quezon, who died of tuberculosis on Aug. 1, 1944 at Saranac Lake, New York, was buried at Arlington Cemetery in Virginia. His remains were brought to the North Cemetery two years later.

Huk ambush

Doña Aurora was killed on April 28, 1949, in an ambush by members of the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon, an underground communist alliance formed during World War II against the Japanese army.

Her daughter, Ma. Aurora, and Zenaida's husband, Philip Buencamino, who were traveling with her were also killed in the ambush. *DJ Yap*

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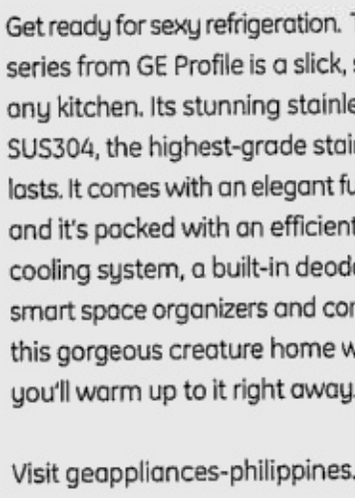

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Punongbayan killed in PAF chopper crash

From page A1

at around 11:30 a.m. As he rushed to PAF headquarters to confirm the crash, the usually gregarious Gordon was too grief-stricken to even contemplate his luck.

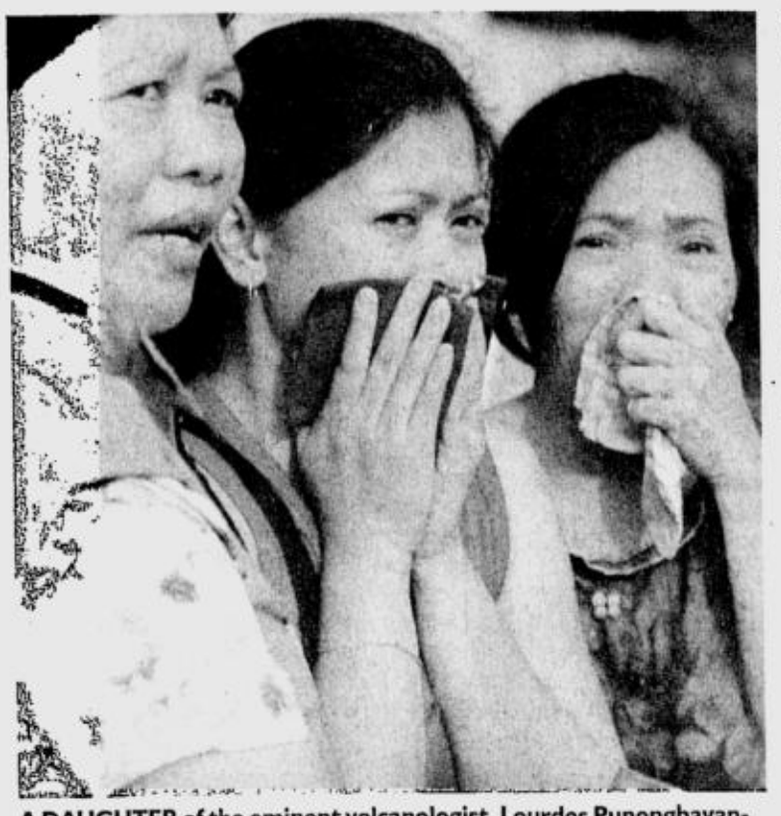
"It really slices my heart because I know this man," Gordon said of Punongbayan in a phone interview. "He was a good friend and he worked very hard. I wasn't concerned that I could have been on that helicopter. I grieve for him, I grieve for the pilot and the [other passengers]."

The Phivolcs team on the chopper was composed of geology division chief Dr. Norman Tuñgol, associate scientist Dr. Jessie Daligdig, and science researchers Dindo Javier and Orlando Abengoza.

The others killed were the pilot 1st Lt. Reynaldo Gerodias, the co-pilot 1st Lt. Jason Salazar, S/Sgt. Edgar Ramolete and A1C Wilbert Tacata.

"Their immediate mission was to assess the potential of additional landslides in the area once the rains come," Phivolcs chief Renato Solidum told dzMM radio.

Solidum said Punongbayan was trying to determine if the people of Dingalan needed to be evacuated.



A DAUGHTER of the eminent volcanologist, Lourdes Punongbayan-Jaleco (center), breaks down on seeing the body bags being unloaded at Villamor Air Base on Thursday afternoon. ROGER MARGALLO

'Go ahead'

Gordon said he and Punongbayan, 68, visited Aurora two weeks ago to survey a community again threatened by disaster.

He said Punongbayan visited Aurora again by land and later told him that they should make an aerial inspection. Punongbayan scheduled it for yesterday.

Gordon said he phoned Cruz to borrow a helicopter for their inspection, and got confirmation for its use on Wednesday. On that day, Punongbayan called him to ask if he would come along.

The senator said he had so many things on his schedule and was not sure if he could make it. "If I'm not there [at takeoff time], just go ahead," he told Punongbayan.

On getting home late Wednesday night, Gordon noted that he had an e-mail from Punongbayan. But he did not read the message.

And since he had slept late for several successive days, he did not make it to Villamor Air Base yesterday.

Gordon recalled that only two nights ago, he and Punongbayan had fun at a Red Cross fund-raising event at The Fort: "We were very happy."

He said Punongbayan kept on telling him, *"Tayong dalawa palagi* (It's always the two of us)."

E-mailed report

Gordon said he had Punongbayan's e-mail opened at the PAF yesterday and found that it was a full report, complete with recommendations.

"To address your deep concern about the unnecessary loss of life and property that may befall the town of Dingalan, Aurora Province due to flash floods, a field survey was conducted on 23 April 2005 by a team composed of Dr. Norman Tungol, chief geologist of Phivolcs, Mr. Albert Muñoz of Disaster Management of PNRC and myself," Punongbayan wrote.

He listed five observations on the effects of the flash floods that ravaged Dingalan last December.

"The above observations need confirmation via aerial survey with the use of helicopter that will allow us to fully map the areas impacted by flash floods," the e-mail read.

It was signed "Ray Punongbayan."

'Big loss'

"This is a big loss," Phivolcs' Solidum told the INQUIRER. "It's a tragedy for all of us. Our only consolation was that they died with the fulfillment of their work."

Solidum said the trip of Punongbayan and the other scientists was "for a special purpose: to assess the hazards, to protect the people who lived there..."

"We should remember them as people who were very serious with their work in improving disaster management," he said.

During their last meeting before the mission, the team was confident that it would be back with a report, Solidum said.

He said it was almost routine for Phivolcs people to ride helicopters when on an assignment.

"It's part of the job, so we're used to it. It's like riding a car or bus. Of course you worry, but you're used to it," he said.

Solidum, who was a student of Punongbayan's at the University of the Philippines, said the latter's work in Phivolcs made it a "credible scientific institution."

"The Philippines is well acknowledged in the world because of him. He was the one who really raised the awareness of Filipinos on what to do during disasters," Solidum said, adding:

"He was very dedicated and he was very enthusiastic to [learn]."

Punongbayan was director of Phivolcs since 1982. He retired in 2003 and became executive director and treasurer of Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative, a group still involved in research.

Solidum said Tuñgol and Daligdig were also leading some projects under the United Nations Development Program.

"Who would check the other places now?" he said.

'Totally damaged'

Noli Anarcon, community affairs officer of Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, said the team organized by Senior Insp. Pablo Cruz, the town's police director, reached the crash site in Sitio Lamac, Barangay Ligaya, at about 11 a.m.

Citing reports reaching the office of Mayor Dominador Mandia, Anarco said the passengers' bodies were charred.

The remains of the passengers have been taken to the National Bureau of Investigation for DNA sampling, Senator Gordon said.

Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla, PAF spokesperson, said the Huey was "totally damaged." He said the cause of the crash was still being investigated.

The pilot, Lieutenant Gerodias, 31, of Pikit, North Cotabato, was a 1999 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

He had two children.

Sources in the PAF said Gerodias was in Manila for a vacation but agreed to pilot the ill-fated chopper.

PAF pilots can be summoned to fly even when they are on vacation. *With reports from Nikko Dizon in Manila; Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

IN THE KNOW

THE BELL UH-1 Iroquois, most commonly referred to as the Huey, is the most famous helicopter in the world. (The chopper that crashed, a Huey UH-1H, is an improved version.)

Built in greater number than any other military aircraft since World War II, the Huey first flew in 1956 and earned fame during the Vietnam War as the mainstay of the United States' air mobile units.

It has been featured in many war movies, including "Apocalypse Now" and "Platoon," as well as in numerous action adventure films.

The Philippine Air Force's Huey helicopters are hand-me-downs from the United States under the RP-US military assistance agreement.

They have served as utility helicopters to transport personnel and logistics to places that other means of transportation cannot reach and where fixed-wing aircraft cannot land.

In 2003, the PAF had 38 Hueys, which were extensively used in operations against communist rebels and the extremist Abu Sayyaf.

The Hueys suffered at least six accidents in the last 10 years, prompting some PAF pilots to call them "flying coffins."

The deadliest was in March 1996, when a Huey crashed near Catbalogan, Northern Samar, killing all its passengers, including Brig. Gen. Danilo Olay of the Army. The chopper reportedly crashed into the sea and exploded on impact after its engine stalled while flying to Samar in bad weather.

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He was Inquirer's first ...

From page A1

took the helm of government and directed the nation out of chaos and ignorance in those days of massive mudflow, sulfur, pyroclastics and lahar.

From last April when the volcano started acting up to the monsoon months, when lahar was sweeping over the Central Plains, Punongbayan was a byword on the lips of a terrified people.

Most credible

Punongbayan was a most credible man because he was "ordinary." A geology major, married to a nurse, and father of four, he taught at the University of the Philippines before he joined Phivolcs in 1982 when the institute was just an obscure department at the Manila weather bureau.

His name was first heard during the earthquake that devastated Luzon in July 1990.

Punongbayan is aware that the country's resources hardly provide for its tectonic setting.

Though one of the world's most earthquake-prone countries with an average of five quakes a day, the Philippines lacks seismic stations, monitoring equipment and trained personnel. Only one of our 12 seismic stations has a telephone. First reports of earthquakes here come from monitoring services in Hong Kong or the United States.

In 1987, Punongbayan first raised his voice to call on government for disaster preparedness. No one listened, until the killer quake struck in 1990 and hundreds of lives were lost.

Sleepless in land of volcanoes

In early 1991, his voice was again heard warning of volcanic eruptions. This time everybody listened, and so thousands of lives were saved.

Punongbayan is one of the few men sitting in vigil over the nation day and night. There is no holiday for him because all the days look the same.

"You can't take long naps because volcanoes don't sleep," he once said in an interview.

"My kids are excited about my job, but my wife is not," he said, looking forward to a time when he can stay home and cook for his family, maybe write poems as he used to, or do some sketches, without bothering about earthquake-and-volcano updates.

Unlike typhoons, the occurrence of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions can never be predicted by even the most modern technology. Aside from keeping a 24-hour watch on dangerous mountains such as Pinatubo, Taal, Mayon, Kanlaon, Hibok-Hibok and Bulusan, Punongbayan has to soothe the people's panic or even their anger at the bad news he brings, such as his recent revelation about the Marikina Fault.

But how can one watch over a land with 200 volcanoes, 21 of them active, and still get some sleep?

Making do with primitive tools, a man with the level-headedness of Punongbayan faced Pinatubo as it spewed an apocalyptic amount of energy.

Grateful nation

The nation is grateful for that calm, analytical mind that confronted the fury of a mountain that has reshaped geography and the lives of millions.

The nation is grateful to Punongbayan and his comforting presence that forged ahead, like Moses leading his people out of the plagues, in the time of terror and devotion.

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Lure of jobs abroad leads girls to sex den

By Tina G. Santos

BEWARE of sweet-talking strangers who promise better job opportunities abroad.

That was the warning of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to women jobseekers, particularly those from the provinces, after its agents rescued 17 women, mostly minors, from a nightclub in Nueva Ecija.

The women were reportedly lured into working at the night spot, then forced into prostitution, after they were promised jobs as entertainers in Japan and Canada.

Members of a white slavery syndicate took advantage of the women's innocence, said NBI Anti-Human Trafficking Division chief Romulo Asis.

Asis said the girls were not aware that Japan had tightened its immigration laws on foreigners seeking employment there.

"And they didn't even know that we do not send entertainers to Canada," he added.

Investigation showed that the 17 women were required to undergo "on-the-job training" at Erina's Place, a nightclub in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija.

The "training" was supposed "to help them adjust as entertainers abroad."

But the girls claimed they were forced to have sex with patrons and were virtually held as prisoners at the club.

Two suspects identified as Emma Dionisio and Errol Fuentes were arrested during the raid.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Dionisio was the owner-operator of Erina's Place and the Elina Talent Promotions and Management Services.

Fuentes, on the other hand, is reportedly the caretaker of a resort in San Jose City where the young women were often brought and forced to have sex with customers who took them out of the club.

The raid was conducted following a complaint from the parents of the teenage girls, who were recruited from different provinces.

Dionisio and Fuentes have been charged with violating the Special Law on Child Abuse, the Anti-Human Trafficking Law and the Migrant Workers Act.

Japanese falls from 33rd floor of Makati City condominium

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE EARLY morning silence at a Makati City condominium was broken yesterday by a loud thud on the street outside.

Minutes later, the body of Shigekazu Morikawa, a Japanese, was found on the sidewalk outside the 37-story Regency Building on Tordesillas Street in Salcedo Village, Barangay Bel-Air.

Police said he had fallen from the 33rd floor.

"We are not ruling out foul play, although we are also considering that he might have jumped on purpose," said Senior Insp. Gary Reyes, chief of the Makati police homicide section.

Morikawa, 40, was found dead at 5:25 a.m., some 30 minutes after security guards heard a loud thud.

Initial investigation showed that Morikawa spent the night inside Unit 3305 owned by Hiroyuki Kishida who shares it with his brother, Shinichi.

Friend and employer

Reyes said Kishida, whom police said was engaged in the manufacturing business, was Morikawa's friend and employer.

Almost one and a half hours after police saw Morikawa's body, investigators went to Unit 3305.

Kishida told police that he, Shinichi and Morikawa had dinner in a Japanese restaurant and went for a massage at about 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Morikawa, Kishida said, was "very drunk" before they went to their rooms.

Describing the room that had reportedly been occupied by Morikawa, Reyes said the screen on the window from where Morikawa had fallen was forced open.

The homicide section chief said the space on the open screen was enough for someone to pass through.

Morikawa's body was brought to Veronica Funeral Homes in Pasay City.

SOCIAL workers hold quadruplets Mary Jane, Mary Grace, Mary Cristy and Mary Christine Gregorio at the Rizal Medical Center nursery. RODEL ROTONI

MMDA stands by Paco slay suspect

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Tina G. Santos

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday stood by the side of one of its men arrested for allegedly spurring violence in the agency's clearing operations in Manila last week, while it gave due deference to the result of the police investigation.

"Elpidio Gonzales was not the one who fired a shot. What we were doing there was to instill order in the area, which even the police know is a place where riots and gang wars happened several times," said Bobby Esquivel, chief of the MMDA Sidewalk Clearing Operations Group. "We will assist him until the end. We will pay for his bail and we'll never turn our back on him," Esquivel added.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday presented Gonzales to the media after he was arrested by operatives of the Western Police District for the death of a pedicab driver and the wounding of another during the agency's clearing operations along Quirino Avenue in Paco, Manila, a week ago.

Atienza said witnesses positively identified Gonzales as the security man of the MMDA clearing crew who shot dead Danilo Peralta and wounded Marcio Quiñones during an altercation following an MMDA clearing operation.

The mayor also ordered the filing of criminal charges against the suspect.

"Gonzales supervises the team. Maybe he's the one the residents saw, that's why he was identified as a suspect," Esquivel said, adding that Gonzales did not even have a gun. *With Jean Marionne Bermudez, trainee*

Matillano son clears self of raps

THE SON of retired Police Director Eduardo Matillano said he did not poke a gun at or hit anyone in the face last April 19 in Pasig City.

"I never even carried a gun," said Bruce Matillano, 31.

Although he admitted owning a licensed gun, he said he did not carry it outside his home.

Bruce claimed it was SPO1 Genaro Blasurca, 42, who had a gun and leveled it on his chest.

"He (Blasurca) was in civilian clothes," Bruce said in an affidavit. "So we requested for his ID. It irked him, and he pulled out his gun and pointed it at my chest."

However, Blasurca in his complaint against the younger Matillano said Bruce, who was with his friends, punched him and flashed a gun tucked in his waist.

Outnumbered, Blasurca said he fled and sought the help of a nearby security guard.

Police records showed Bruce also saying that Blasurca ran away during the incident. *Luige del Puerto*

Quadruplets home in Taguig City

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WHEN Renato Gregorio, 32, brought his newly born quadruplets to their home in Taguig City on Wednesday, his four other children met the small party with surprise in their eyes. "*Bakit ang dami*? (Why so many?)" his children asked.

Their mother Rosalinda, 29, gave birth to the quadruplets on April 21 at the Rizal Medical Center in Pasig City.

Visiting his wife yesterday at the hospital where she is still under observation, the brand new father looked like he had lost a lot of sleep. He said he had just arrived from his duty as a watchman for a Makati City company. The job pays him P10,000 a month. His wife is unemployed.

"*Masaya ako na malungkot* (I am happy and sad at the same time)," he said. Though he is happy about the babies, he had doubts about his capability to provide for eight children.

The new additions to the family will be named Mary Jane, Mary Grace, Mary Cristy, and Mary Christine. The eldest child is 9 years old; the youngest, 3. In the meantime, help continues to pour in, but for how long?

The hospital had given the Gregorios a 50-percent discount; Taguig City Rep. Alan Cayetano paid for the remaining medical bills. A firm gave the babies a box of diapers and a dozen cans of milk. Renato's officemates gave him P9,000. What happens after?

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Hotdogs sizzle again in Bataan

Games Today (Ynares Center)
4:45 p.m. – FedEx vs. Red Bull
7:35 p.m. – Ginebra vs. Alaska

By June Navarro

BALANGA—Purefoods rode on the heroics of Noy Castillo to subdue Shell, 95-82, Thursday and snap out of a long victory drought in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference before an overflow crowd at the Bataan People's Center here.

Castillo unloaded 11 of his 18 points in the final half as the TJ Hotdogs survived a splendid debut by Shell import Melvin Robinson and chalked up their fifth win in 11 games.

Robinson, who replaced the unstable Wesley Wilson, had 21 points to pace the Turbochargers, who took their third straight setback.

The loss dropped Shell into a three-way tie with the TJ Hotdogs and the Sta. Lucia Realtors.

"In the past, we always have problems protecting a big lead so I challenged my players not to waste it this time," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio.

Robinson, who arrived on Wednesday, was visibly out of sync as he gasped for breath most of the time due to the humid atmosphere inside the coliseum.

The Turbochargers leaned on the 7-foot, 255-pound giant when they made a desperate attempt to turn their fate around. But Robinson faded and became a non-factor in the final period.

"They are not yet used to their import, so I guess we got lucky today," said Gregorio, whose win was fashioned after a 30-minute delay due to a power outage in the third quarter.

Anthony Smith of Purefoods finished with 14 points and 22 rebounds. He will soon be replaced by 7-foot-1 Lorenzo Coleman.

In another development, Barangay Ginebra has tapped the services of Andrei Brown, a 6-foot-9, 245-pound banger, to replace Eddie Elisma in a bid to end a losing skid against the hot-streaking Alaska Aces today at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City.

Brown, the last player to be cut in the New Jersey Nets lineup in the NBA this season, tries to pull the Gin Kings out of a three-game slide as he goes up against Alaska's Dickey Simpkins.

FedEx and Red Bull are also seeking to redeem themselves from heart-breaking setbacks in the other game.

The scores:

Purefoods 95—Castillo 18, Smith 14, Evangelista 14, Simon 12, Limpot 12, Raymundo 12, Yap 6, Artadi 4, Espinosa 3.

Shell 82—Robinson 21, Dela Cruz 18, Tubid 12, Alvarez 8, Mamaril 7, Ferreria 6, Sotto 3, Cruz 2, Jackson 2, Yap 2.

Quarterscores: 23-26; 48-41; 73-63; 95-82.

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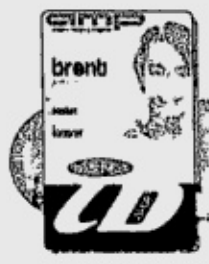

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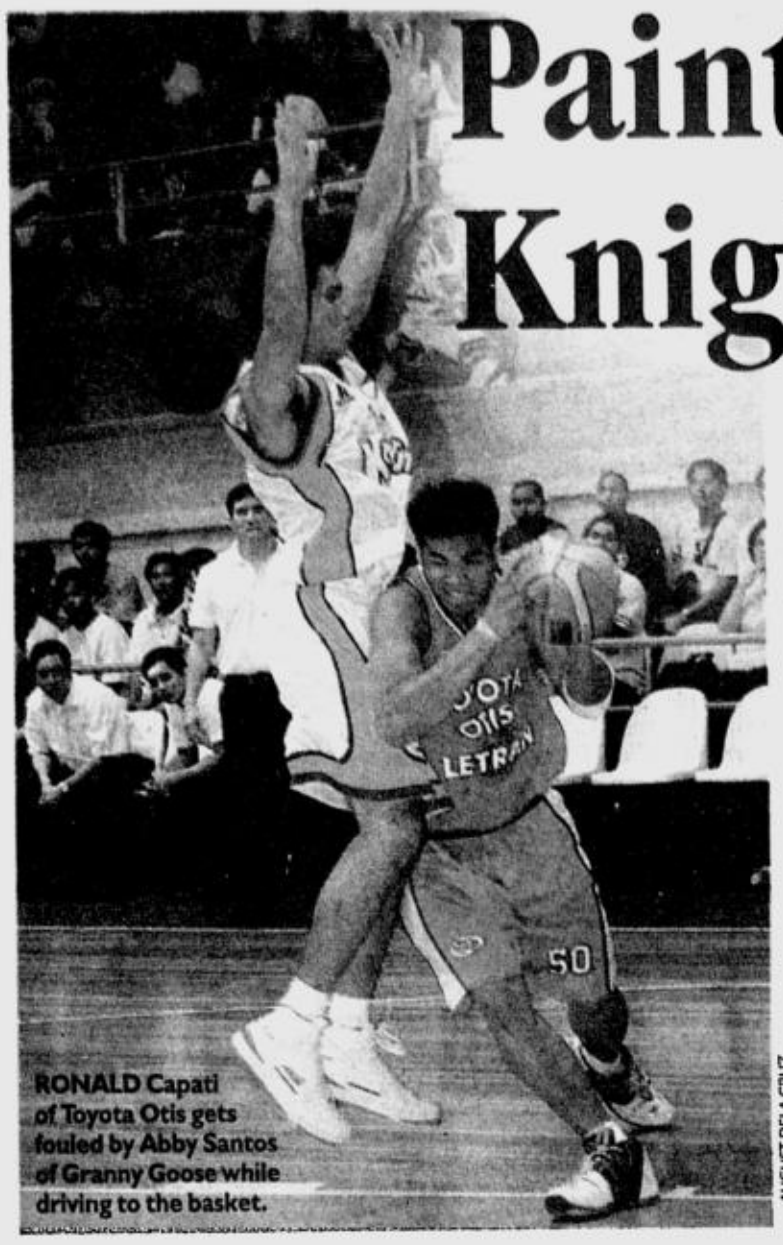
Paint Masters, Knights prevail


RONALD Capati of Toyota Otis gets fouled by Abby Santos of Granny Goose while driving to the basket.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Games Tomorrow (JCSGO Gym)
2 p.m.—Bacchus Energy vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Montaña Pawnshop vs Granny Goose

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FIL-AM Anthony Washington hit two charities in the final 5.8 seconds to lift Welcoat Paints past Harbour Centre, 81-78, last night in the PBL Unity Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

Washinton's free throws cushioned the Paint Masters' victory after the Port Masters threatened in the last 10 seconds through Mac Cardona, who nailed a running jumper to cut Welcoat's lead to 79-78.

Earlier, Toyota Otis-Letran threaded on the brink of another collapse before repulsing Granny Goose Kornets, 85-79.

The Knights wasted an 18-point deficit and appeared headed for defeat until Mark Macapagal and Ronjay Enrile stepped in to bail them out and score their third win in six games.

Meltdowns

"We lost a huge lead but it was a good thing we managed to regain our bearings. We learned our lessons in our past defeats to Harbour and Montaña," said Toyota coach Louie Alas, referring to their endgame meltdowns to the Port Masters and the Jewels.

The Snackmasters dropped to 2-4.

Things had looked bright for the Knights as they pushed their 46-36 halftime lead to 58-40.

But Granny Goose patiently fought its way back and even threatened to pull off an upset after Jett Latonio hit a three-pointer to give the Snackmasters a 72-68 lead midway in the fourth quarter.

But Enrile hit a short jumper and then Macapagal knocked in his fourth triple as Toyota Otis regained the lead for good with two minutes and 37 seconds left.

"I'm glad Ronjay and Mark stepped up when we wanted them most. Their big baskets down the stretch really helped us," said Alas.

First Game

TOYOYA OTIS 85 —Daa 14, Oreta 14, Capati 12, Macapagal 12, Larong 7, Enrile 7, Coronel 6, Afonzo 6, Alcaraz 4, Tagupa 3, Andaya 0, Pinera 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 79—Quinahan 16, Almeda 14, Grijaldo 12, Concha 7, Lanete 6, Saladaga 6, Latonio 5, Cruz 5, Guerrero 3, Ferrer 2, David 2, Ibanes 0, Santos 0.

Quarters: 27-19, 46-36, 68-65, 85-79

Palaro, Tour Scoop topics

THREE big sporting events scheduled to start within the next two weeks—the Palarong Pambansa, Tour Pilipinas and Nestea Beach Volleyball—will be the topic in today's SCOOP Sa Kamayan weekly session at the Kamayan Restaurant-Padre Faura in Malate.

Appearing as guests in the session are Len Toledo, the Department of Education national coordinator of task force on school sports, and Iloilo schools superintendent, Dr. Raymundo Lapating, Philcycling secretary general Mar Mendoza, Ben Pangan and Patrick Gregorio, Ben Estavillo, Nestea events specialist, Otie Camangian, tournament director and Edd Fuentes of the publicity group.

Chot picks 14 PBL stars to RP pool

THE BEST the country can offer.

With this in mind, national coach Chot Reyes yesterday added 14 players from the Philippine Basketball League to the national pool, studded with professional stars to make sure the strongest team will be assembled for the 2005 Southeast Asian Basketball Association (SEABA) Championship in Singapore.

The PBL aces join the 19 pros and two amateurs earlier selected by Reyes to train and work for berths in the RP five that will compete in the Asian championship set this September in Doha, Qatar.

Also in the pool are members of the RP Cebuana Lhuillier team earlier picked by the Basketball Association of the Philippines for stints in the SEABA and the Southeast Asian Games.

The team was disbanded earlier this week on recommendation by the Philippine Olympic Committee-inspired basketball committee, following its scandalous loss to a ragtag squad of former pros and movie stars.

"In the evaluation of the coaching staff, we decided to pick these players because we feel they are capable of adjusting to the system we're implementing. Besides, these are the best talents they have," said Reyes yesterday.

The PBL stalwarts actually came from a list of 32 names submitted by PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad to Reyes. The new RP aspirants are Harbour Center's LA Tenorio, Mac Cardona and Gabby Espinas, Montaña Pawnshop's Froilan Baguion, Eric dela Cuesta, and Jondan Salvador, Magnolia Ice Cream's Dennis Miranda, Cesar Catli, Arwind Santos and Jason Misolas, Granny Goose's Jett Latonio, JR Quiñahan and Abby Santos, and Jay-R Reyes of Welcoat.

REYES

The two amateurs previously tapped by Reyes currently training with the 19 PBA players are 6-foot-9 Fil-Am forward Anthony Washington, who is a mainstay of Welcoat, and former Air Philippines player Mike Holper.

"We've already done our part. As I've said, if it's for the national team, we are always ready to help and make our players available," said Trinidad, who met with Reyes the other day.

The SEABA championship, which will be held June 20 to 26 in Singapore, serves as qualifying tournament for this year's ABC Championship. The top two ABC teams then qualify for next year's World Basketball Championship in Saitama, Japan.

Meanwhile, Reyes said he will be naming his choice for SEABA coach, as well as the pro players from his 20-man pool likely to join amateur stars in the lineup, on Monday during the PBA's regular board meeting.

"I will be presenting the battle plan for the SEABA to the board for its approval," said Reyes, who is expected to serve as coaching consultant.

Reyes had earlier denied an INQUIRER story quoting him as saying he had assured victory for the SEABA and the SEA Games tournaments.

"I want to correct that statement attributed to me," said Reyes. "I never said the titles in those tournaments are in the bag or anything to that effect; not at all."

The statement quoted him as saying that winning in both tournaments is a foregone conclusion if the RP team for both events would come from the 20-man pool of PBA players.

Marc Anthony Reyes

5th JVC goes high with record purse

JVC (PHILS.) Inc. marks its fifth staging of the JVC Open Badminton Championships with a record purse of more P1 million at stake in what has become the year's most anticipated sports event.

Featuring the country's foremost players, the upcoming stars, the veterans and top corporations, the event kicks off on July 4 at the Glorietta Activity Center.

"This is going to be the richest, biggest and grandest JVC Open so far in terms of prize money, participation and level of plays. After four years of being in the forefront of badminton, we want to give these players the best tournament to play in," said Hideyuki Takato, president of JVC (Phils.), Inc., during yesterday's launching of the event at the New World Hotel.

The sport is enjoying tremendous popularity and following since JVC staged the first Open in 2001 with tournaments being held almost weekly and badminton courts sprouting like mushrooms from all over.

Others who graced the event were former First Lady and PBA (Philippine Badminton Association) president Amelita "Ming" Ramos, PBA vice president Edgar Aglipay, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and Charoen Watanasim, vice president of International Badminton Federation.

Sponsored by JVC, the event will be held up to July 10 at Glorietta

JVC (Phils.), Inc. and Philippine Badminton Association officials, led by Hideyuki Takato and Amelita 'Ming' Ramos, hit the ceremonial serve launching the 2005 JVC Badminton Open Championships at the New World Hotel yesterday. From left are Kazue Salud, Dennis Salud, Edgar Aglipay, Charoen Watanasim, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, lawyer Faustino Salud, Cindy Kurleto and Jerome Hughes.

SPORTSWATCH

Dychinco, Ardales pace kegfest

FRANKLIN Dychinco and Joseph Ardales produced big rounds to show the way in the youth division of the 30th Grand National and 11th duckpin bowling championships at the Marketplace Center along Kalentong St., Mandaluyong City. Dychinco tallied 345 pinfalls to finish ahead of Marlotte Sebastian (314), Thomas Gregory Sotto (295), Allan Lastima (274), Mary Acel Moreno (274) and Majeek Aberin (268) in the 14-16-year-old category. Ardales carded 285 to pace Kelsey Manosca (267), Ann Abegail Aberin (265), Vhejay Palma (263), John Eric Padrilan (260), Paulo Ema Magbual (259), McDaniel Ehemplo (248), Wilton Moreno (232) and Miko Raymundo (208) in the 10-13-year-old group.

LIVE MATCH: International boxing promoter Johnny Elorde (seated right) and Springboard Foundation chair John Milne (seated left) sign the contract for the "Live Match II, a charity boxfest set at the NBC Tent. With them are former OPBF champion Dennis Laurente (standing middle), Sugar Ray Estrada (left) and Monico Laurente.

New format for Super 4-cocker

A SUPER 4-cock derby with a new format slated on May 26 and 28 at Sta. Ana Cockpit (AP Reyes Avenue, Makati City) is expected to draw a big field of participants. For a minimal entry fee of P5,500, derby hosts Kags Paliza and Aba Badiola has put up a guaranteed prize of P700,000. Each participant who will score two wins in the elimination round gets P10,000, according to pit manager Gerald Go. Meanwhile, the "Fastest Win Challenge One-Cock Ulutan" of Paliza and Badiola is set on Tuesday, May 3 at Texas Cockpit Arena. Pit manager TJ Marquez said two ruedas will be used simultaneously to avoid the long line of participants.

Big Event Part II at Las Piñas

THE ONE-ON-ONE duel of bigtime derby champions will have a sequel on May 14 (Saturday) at Las Piñas Collseum. Dubbed as "Big Event Part II 6-Cock Derby," this one-day event is considered the ultimate battle of prominent cocker-sportsmen due to the staggering entry fee required, even higher than that of the World Slasher Cup. The "Big Event 6-Cock Derby" staged at Las Piñas Collseum on April 9 drew 19 participants. It was won by Dicky Lim of Batangas (RQP San Juan). This time, 30 entries are competing, said sabong idol Patrick Antonio, who is among the organizers. Already entered are Antonio, 2005 World Slasher Cup champion Boy Marzo, famous Sweater man Sonny Lagon, Binangonan Balbina, former world champions Lito Orillaza and Rey Briones, Reps. Butch Pichay and Jacinto Paras, Dicky Lim, Boy de Roca, 2004 NCA Cocker of the Year winners Pol Estrellado and Boy Royo, JU Listana, Mulawin Group, UCAP 8-Cock champion Benjie Lim, Rene Medina, Gerry Ramos, E. Alarilla, Sundance and Mt. Panamao. Meanwhile, the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby series resumes on May 16 and 18. Call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

Submission of weights for derby on

ALL participants to Roligon Mega Cockpit's "Game Ka Na Ba 5-Cock Derby," slated April 30, May 2, 4 and 6, are reminded to submit their entries today from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The first round eliminations will start at 3 p.m. tomorrow featuring more than 100 fights. The second and third rounds are scheduled on May 2 and 4, respectively, while the championship is on May 6. As of yesterday, the confirmed number of participants reached 289. Derby host Rolly Ligon staked a guaranteed prize of P2 million and an imported Isuzu Big Horn (4x4) for the fastest win champion. Entry fee is P6,600. For cockhouse reservation, contact 833- 2275, 852-9812 and 833 -1638. Meanwhile, the "EYB Air Assault 6-Cock Derby," to be hosted by Ampil and Bacud Brothers, is set on May 14, 16 and 18. It dangles a guaranteed prize of P1 million.

60 fights tonight in bigtime event

A STELLAR cast of bigtime cockers will compete tonight when the much-awaited 4-cock derby finally gets underway at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit. More than 60 fights are scheduled with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten as sponsors. Host is veteran cocker Benjie Lim of Laguna, known for winning the UCAP Mercedez 8-Cock Derby in 2003. Seeing action are sabong idol Patrick Antonio, Bebot Roxas of Tarlac, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Gov. Ito Ynares, Gerry Ramos, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza, William Go, ASF Farms, Pol Estrellado, Jun Marasigan, Pepito Ngo, JU Listana, Ramon Mancenares, Madlambayan Brothers and Joel Fernando. Meanwhile, pit managers Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano announced that the next 4-cock derby is set on May 6 with the Rule of Law group as host. Also slated is the "PCCA Barkadahan 5-Cock Derby" on May 9, 11 and 13. For details, contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Defining a miracle

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

GOLF is a game replete with surprises.

It makes you score with a chip when you aren't supposed to, as when Tiger Woods sank that improbable shot on 16 to win the 2005 Masters.

It gives you an ego trip when you least expect it, as when you rammed home a putt from 50 feet on the last hole to win a tournament by one.

It creates an instant knighthood-feel on you, as when you got paired with a prince in a celebrity tournament.

It puts you on level with a statesman, as when you were put in a flight that included a president of a republic.

The last two, even if they are more than bonus points in your life worth pasting in your slum book, are actually normal occurrences in golf. In this game, distinctions as to one's station in life are non sequitur. Laborer or not, CEO or not, every member in a flight has all the rights accruing to his/her flight mates.

Can you play pick-up basketball with a premier?

No. But you can play golf with a premier anytime.

A 7-year-old can play golf with a 50-year-old, and both can have some fun.

But will the two have the same level of fun when, say, they play basketball? Maybe. But, honestly, the fun would all be just in the mind of the 50-year-old. I mean, the 50-year-old can merely pretend the enjoyment.

Not in golf. In this game, you are on your own. You do it the way your body and mind want you to do it. However, very often in golf, what your mind can conceive, your body can't achieve.

Not only is golf a game full of surprises.

It is also a game that makes you want to believe—if you are an atheist, I mean-there is God. For, what would the aptest explanation be for a hole in one but to deem it as the work of God? And that being so, would you not consider that a miracle?

A miracle is the closest thing to proving God's existence. And, all the time, I consider an ace a miracle.

Of course, there's a scientific explanation for a hole in one suddenly happening: the ace maker is good. And, if you are good, you are lucky.

However, a hole in one happens. It is not actually made per se. It happens because someone else helped make it happen. God helps make it happen because it is a shot from among a million shots that finds the hole. God helps those who help themselves.

A phenomenon is a creation of God. You say otherwise, fine. But when extraordinary replaces the ordinary, I believe God has a hand in it. No matter what one says, a hole in one is extraordinary, whether done by Tiger Woods or not.

Now this thing about Juvic Pagunsan leaving the amateur ranks. Is that true? I mean, will he not suit up for the Philippine Team to the SEA Games as what the Inquirer had reported a while back?

If it should happen that Juvic would turn pro before the SEA Games, that'd be a shame, considering that Juvic is a cinch to make the team and a hot favorite to nail the SEA Games gold again.

And what's also this news that Temyong Murakami also wants to turn pro? Disturbing?

Oh, well, this is a free country. Nobody's stopping anyone to do what he/she feels is right.

So that now, if in the end, Juvic and Temyong, who had submitted themselves to the routine SEA Games medical checkup already, decide to remain amateur and continue being in the NGAP pool training for the SEA Games, will you also consider that a miracle?

If you ask me, no. Nothing extraordinary there. Just ordinary. Normal.

***

FASTBREAK. Mayor Peewee Trinidad of Pasay plays host to some 100 golfers at Villamor today in a benefit event backed chiefly by San Miguel Corporation. Taby Tabaniag has requested Jake Ayson and me to join him do the officiating, and we obliged—very gladly, that is. If it's Mr. Golf making the request, who are we, mere mortals, to refuse a man of wisdom? *Insan* Taby is only 86 years young, by golly!

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Bata, Django face Taiwanese

KAOHSIUNG—Efren "Bata" Reyes opens his bid for a second straight leg title in the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour Friday against one stalwart from a maximum roster of eight Taiwanese fielded by the host country in the third stage set at the Kaohsiung Business Centre.

The back-to-back overall champion and tournament top seed gets going at the start of the three-day meet against Taiwanese Wang Hung-Hsia in one of the day's featured matches.

Gandy Valle, who won the Tour's opening leg in Singapore before Reyes struck in Jakarta, meets Japanese star Satoshi Kawabata.

Both Reyes and Valle have similar 100 points in the Order of Merit that will decide the top 10 Asian players after the Tour who will qualify for the world pool championship, also to be hosted by this city.

Former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, still seeking his first title in the tour, tackles dangerous Taiwanese Kuo Po-cheng.

Last-minute entry Leonardo "Dodong" Andam is also expected to have his hands full opposite Alok Kumar of India, a one-time conqueror of Bustamante in the tour.

Tour newcomers Rolan Alcano and Christopher Bombita will tackle Thanh-Nam of Vietnam and Yudarman Kamarudin of Indonesia.

Alcano is a World Pool Championship contender two years ago in Cardiff, Wales, while Bombita is the least fancied in Team Philippines.

Sponsored by San Miguel Beer and organized by ESPN Star Sports, the opening matches will be aired live on Star Sports starting at 5 p.m. today. Play on the second day will be shown starting at 3 p.m. on April 30, and the final matches will be aired starting at 5 p.m. on May 1.

Reyes, the top Filipino cue artist, has won five of nine legs in the three-year-old tour so far and is still undefeated in the finals.

Pasay City Mayor's Cup today

THE PASAY City Mayor's Cup will be played today at the Villamor Golf Club course with a hundred players competing.

The 18-hole event honoring Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad is principally sponsored by San Miguel Corp. Tee off time is between 6 and 10 a.m., according to organizing committee co-chairs Felix Amate Jr. and Maj. Gen. Charlie Tanega.

The major sponsors are Mariano Nocum, SM Prime Holdings, Federal Land, Teletech, PAGCOR, Philippine Airlines and Mirant Pagbilao, while Philtranco, Solar Sports, The Grand Plaza Hotel/Heritage Hotel Manila, Solanie International, Amazing Theater and Royal Star are the minor backers.

Copacobana, Network Hotel, Yaletrak WWW Express, lawyer Nene Francisco and Citibank are the hole sponsors of the fundraising event for the destitute of Pasay.

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Spurs rebound; Suns shine

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—The San Antonio Spurs answered the wake-up call with a vengeance on Wednesday, thumping Denver 104-76 to knot their National Basketball Association first-round playoff series at one game apiece.

Tim Duncan scored 18 of his 24 points in a huge first half, and Tony Parker upped his game as the Spurs, seeded second in the Western Conference, overwhelmed the seventh-seeded Nuggets, who had stolen home-court advantage with a stunning win in the series opener.

"We came out with a much better focus," Duncan said. "We got off to a great start, we were able to move the ball and take good shots, we weren't forcing anything."

In Phoenix, the West's top-seeded Suns fought off the hungry Memphis Grizzlies, 108-103, to take a 2-0 lead in their series, while the Chicago Bulls won their second straight at home to take a 2-0 lead over Washington in their best-of-seven Eastern Conference series.

In San Antonio, the sprained ankle that still seemed to hinder Duncan as the playoffs began appeared a distant memory as the Spurs superstar scored 24 points in 28 minutes on court.

Nor could the Nuggets do much to slow the rest of the Spurs as Parker, Brent Barry and Manu Ginobili combined for 52 points.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich changed his starting lineup, starting Barry and bringing All-Star guard Ginobli to provide an explosive boost from the bench.

The move worked perfectly as Barry scored eight of his 16 points in the first quarter—when Parker scored 12 of his 19—and Ginobili had 12 of his 17 points in the second period, when San Antonio turned it into a rout.

Rookie Beno Udrih added 10 points off the bench for the Spurs, who dominated in every category, shooting 48 percent from the field, holding a 46-39 advantage in rebounding and leading by as many as 33 points.

Popovich said the Spurs wouldn't be able to afford any let-up when the series moves to Denver for games three and four.

The Suns looked to be staring at a possible split when the eighth-seeded Grizzlies grabbed a 99-94 lead with less than five minutes remaining.

But Quentin Richardson answered 14 seconds later with a three-pointer to trigger a 14-4 surge to close the contest.

Shawn Marion made consecutive jumpers to give the Suns the lead and Amare Stoudemire, the Suns' All-Star center, sank two free throws 103-99 advantage.

James Posey split two free throws, pulling the Grizzlies within 103-100. Memphis went to Pau Gasol on the inside and Richardson came over on the weak side and blocked his shot.

On the Suns' ensuing possession, Marion threw up an airball but Richardson grabbed the rebound and was fouled with 15 seconds left. He split two free throws for a four-point lead.

Mike Miller answered with a three-pointer before Steve Nash made two free throws with nine seconds left. After Miller missed a shot from the arc, Richardson sealed things with two foul shots with five seconds to go.

Along with Richardson's sterling play, Stoudemire finished with a playoff career-high 34 points, rebounding from a game one that saw him score just nine.

In Chicago, Kirk Hinrich matched his career-high 34 points to lead the Bulls to a 113-103 victory over the Wizards. The Bulls rallied from a 13-point deficit. *AFP*

BULLS' Antonio Davis (34) and Wizards' Brendan Haywood dispute a rebound in Game One.

Reminiscence

THERE is no question that basketball is the No. 1 sport in the Philippines today. But do you know what started the basketball mania in the country?

My mentor and idol, the late sportscaster Willie Hernandez, started the basketball exposure on radio from the early 1950s, covering the games of the NCAA, UAAP and MICAA in his inimitable style. The TV broadcasts followed after that from 1960 until the present. Now, there is not only the PBA telecast on ABC Channel 5; there is also the PBL in another station and the UAAP and NCAA in still another channel, aside from the NBA and the up-and-coming NBC tournament of national shooter Tac Padilla. It's basketball day in and day out.

Reader Bill Amador once said that the game is "embedded into the subconscious mind not only of the youth but also of the entire populace." For many, many years, it's usually the daddy or elder brothers who are glued on TV three times a week watching basketball not knowing that the 5-year-old son is also watching and enjoying the superb playing style of some of the country's basketball greats, including Caloy Loyzaga, Badion, Carbonell, Moro Lorenzo, Sonny Jaworski, Jun Papa, Danny Florencio, Big Boy Reynoso, Freddie Webb, Boy Marquez, Orly Bauzon, Roehl Nadurata, Francis Arnaiz, Bogs Adornado, Lawrence Mumar, Alvin Patrimonio, Johnny Abarrientos, Jojo Lastimosa and others.

In his young age, the boy becomes addicted to basketball. He loves to play no other sport and enjoys no other program on TV but basketball games, several times a week all year round. The games are also re-broadcast at some other time slots of the day supposedly for the benefit of those who failed to watch the live telecast earlier, but the truth is this is only to accommodate more commercials and generate more income for the organizers and radio/TV networks. They benefited most during all these years to the prejudice of Philippine sports in general.

Girls were the first to play the game here in 1905, something that could establish the Philippines as a pioneer in women's basketball. American teachers introduced the sport here together with baseball and boxing in the early 1900s.

The 1911 Manila Carnival and athletic meet, which became the forerunner of the defunct Interscholastics, held the first official basketball tournament for girls, with Tondo Intermediate School winning the five-team championship. Girls basketball was dropped from the Manila Carnival roster of events in 1914.

According to former POC president retired Col. Julian Malonso, among the women basketball players of that golden era were the late Doña Aurora Aragon-Quezon, wife of President Manuel Quezon and Doña Josefa Edralin Marcos, mother of President Ferdinand Marcos.

Men first competed in organized basketball in 1910. Games were played outdoors mostly at the Nozaleda Park. For indoor games, the venues were the Manila YMCA and the Armory in Intramuros.

In 1913, the Far Eastern Games, a triangular meet among China, Japan and the Philippines, was launched. The Filipinos dominated the basketball tournaments, winning nine of 10 championships in the Games until 1934. The only time that the Filipinos lost the cage crown was in 1921 when host China nipped the Philippines, 30-27.

The schools played a vital role in the unprecedented growth of basketball in the country. In 1924, sports officials of UP, Ateneo, UST, University of Manila, San Beda and La Salle organized the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Eight years later, UP, UST and Far Eastern University withdrew from the NCAA to form the University Athletic Association of the Philippines.

Basketball became even more popular here following the Philippines' fifth-place finish in the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936 when basketball made its debut. Dr. James Naismith, inventor of the game, declared the tournament open. The games were played outdoors on a clay court and the Filipinos, skippered by Ambrosio Padilla, who later became a senator of the Philippines and president of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation, now defunct, won four of their five games, losing only to the powerhouse and eventual gold medal winner United States, 56-23. The Filipinos' dominance of the dash-and-dribble sport extended to the Asian region where they were many-time champions of the Asian Games and ABC wars.

Odds up on Jackson's coachi

LOS ANGELES—The odds that nine-time NBA champion coach Phil Jackson will return next season have increased a bit.

Jackson's agent, Todd Musburger, said some time ago it was 50-50 that his client would be back on the bench later this year after taking this season off.

"I'll move the needle to 51-49 in favor of coaching," Musburger said on Wednesday.

Several teams are interested, including the Los Angeles Lakers and New York Knicks. Musburger wouldn't identify other possibilities, but Cleveland, Portland and Minnesota are logical suitors. And Musburger wouldn't say whether Jackson has been offered a job.

The 59-year-old Jackson guided the Lakers to three championships in five years before he and the team went their separate ways last June—three days after the Lakers lost to the Detroit Pistons in the NBA Finals.

One thing seems certain—a final decision won't be made for some time.

"Phil is engaged in a process of talking about his coaching future with various NBA clubs and he will take whatever time is necessary to make some important decisions," Musburger said by telephone from Chicago. "There is no timetable. There are no ultimatums and there are no dates in which something has to occur.

"I think everyone we have spoken to understands that a return to coaching is a big decision and should not be taken lightly. He'll be very careful before he says yes."

Musburger confirmed that he and Jackson met on Monday with New York Knicks president Isiah Thomas in Los Angeles.

Musburger returned to Chicago on Tuesday, and Jackson and Lakers owner Jerry Buss reportedly got together on Tuesday.

Jackson, who finished a five-year, $30 million contract last season, is expected to command a significant increase per year should he return to coaching. He has coached a record-tying nine NBA championship teams—six in Chicago and three in Los Angeles. Red Auerbach coached the Boston Celtics to nine titles in the 1960s. *AP*

JACKSON: Nine NBA titles

GENETICS, STEROIDS

Superman-like athletes could materialize soon

WASHINGTON—Genetic engineering and steroid enhancement could turn Superman-like fantasy figures into reality, American football officials and players warned in a Congressional hearing here Wednesday.

The first signs of a massive mighty race might already be appearing in 21st Century American sports, where teams do not face World Anti-Doping Agency standards even though lawmakers are pondering imposing such measures.

Concerns about the future of doping were on the minds of several who testified here Wednesday at a House Government Reform committee hearing about steroids in the National Football League.

The notion of a super-fast, super-strong man might even be playing out in the NFL, where linemen are more massive and faster than two decades ago, even though NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue said his sport has no steroid problem.

"The quickening pace of new developments in medicine and science, including gene engineering in ways we have not even begun to see, heightens the challenges we all face," Tagliabue said.

"They are body altering, and eventually they will be gene altering." Gene manipulation could replace bionics as the technology which will create a Darth Vader or Steve Austin, better known as TV's "Six Million-Dollar Man" back when that sum was amazing instead of so-so in the US sports world.

"As scientists come to truly understand, and therefore be able to alter, the genetic structure of human beings, the 'Six Million-Dollar Man' will n... be a television fantasy but will become a near-term reality." T... said.

When asked about the grow... of NFL players in the past ... Tagliabue said greater speci... has made position players ma... smaller depending upon n...

Tagliabue noted how ... othe... have found giants from ... world, notably 7-foot-6 Chin... Ming of the NBA's Houston Roc...

Linn Goldberg, a US Anti... Agency physician, has watch... hero images from G.I. Joe to ... Woman take on pumped-up ... tions. Muscle men and super... through steroids were discus... after a US study showed ... popular with pre-teen US ... a more statuesque form.

Nobleza leads TM Taco Master rac

TONI Ann Nobleza of Team Cavite turned the tables on the men's field as she led the race for TM Taco Master Award after only two games in the TM 9-Ball Champions League billiards tournament.

Nobleza, one of only three women cue artists entered in this tournament sponsored by Touch Mobile, Brunswick, Accel and SM Supermalls, racked up 52 points to pace the side event despite Team Cavite's 5-4 loss to Team MayniLA on Monday at the SM Supermall in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Jerome Pena of Team Makati trailed Nobleza, collecting 48 points. Troy Danao of the Pasig squad shared second place with Pena.

Meanwhile, the TM 9-Ball Ang Bagong Sibol, a television program highlighting the featured matches in the TM 9-Ball Champions League, features the pre-tournament competitions held in Pasig earlier this month.

Pasig congressman and team owner Dodot Jaworski organized the pre-qualifying event from which he chose the members of his TM 9-Ball team.

Trick shots and an instructional segment are the other highlights of the Ang Bagong Sibol program aired at 9:30 tonight over IBC-13.

Peter Martin and Pia Boren host the Ang Bagong Sibol program.

Nobleza's leadership of Taco Master came as a surprise as Cavite absorbed its first defeat at ... Team MayniLA on Mon... by Merces, another lady ... Eric Sandoval at the he... City squad's campaign.

The Pasig squad of Ja... Angelito Lacson and ... playing, defeated Pamp... level its slate to one wi... feat, same with its victi...

Rocketman Enterpr... Ramon Tuason of MBA ... nized the event.

GOV. GEORGE Arnaiz (3rd from left) shakes hand with BAP's Graham Lim to seal the agreement to host the AUBC. With them are (from left) lawyer Pempo Martinez, Marilous Kho, Buddy Ravello, Glynda Descuatan, Teddy Reyes and Tonnette Erames.

Asian Universities tilt in Negros O...

NEGROS Oriental will be the center of another international event, the Asian Universities Basketball Championship (AUBC), to be participated in by five foreign teams and three top local squads from June 12-18 in Dumaguete City.

Despite his busy schedule due to the storm of controversies that hit BAP last week, Sec. Gen. Graham Lim flew to Dumaguete and met the AUBC organizing committee led by Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz and co-chair Glenda Descuatan.

Also in the meeting were Negros Oriental Vice Gov. Jose "Petit" Baldaldo, provincial general services officer lawyer Pempo Martinez, provincial administrator Marilou Kho, provincial accountant Teddy Reyes, provincial sports coordinator Buddy Ravello, and Tonette Erames of the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

"It is just a fitting follow-up to the successful hosting of the National Students Basketball Championship," said Lim. "This event is part of the Memorandum of Agreement with Governor Arnaiz to boost sports development and the tourism industry of Negros Oriental."

Five powerhouse teams from South Korea, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Ko... land will be competing.

The Philippines will be repres... top three teams of the National ... ketball Championships—Univers... ual Help-Dalta System, Philipp... Institute and National University.

The AUBC is an annual event of ... Universities Basketball Federati... is the concurrent chair. FIBA pres... Menky Ching was designated the ... chair with South Korean basketball ... Shin Dong Pa among the board ...

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BAP: Exception to the rule

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HIS spokesperson said Peping Cojuangco was amused when teased about the godfather tag given to his style of running the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Joey Romasanta said Cojuangco conveniently laughed off the ribbing that came during the contract signing of Globe's sponsorship for this year's Southeast Asian Games.

As noted by the media, Globe lived up to its name as the country' leading telecommunications firm with its P100-million sponsorship for the games to be hosted by the Philippines.

Cojuangco commended Globe for fueling the *bayanihan* spirit and leading in the drive toward a successful staging of the regional biennial meet.

Things have indeed started to turn roses for this year's SEA Games, a big leap after initial fears had been raised on the ability to raise enough funds for the hosting.

***

Anyway, by the godfather-style of leadership, friends of Cojuangco may've wanted to remind the POC chieftain that his effective resolution of the leadership problem in the national amateur basketball association could be taken negatively by other parties.

In fact, one concerned texter, a perennial proponent of sound national sports development, wondered if Cojuangco may apply the same style in other national sports associations (NSAs).

Said Josef Dumuk from his base in Ilocandia: "What happened in basketball worries me. The procedure might set a precedent that could happen in other NSAs."

Dumuk, whose masterful control of the stats and records became the backbone of the successful media coverage of the 1991 Manila Southeast Asian Games, has reason to be worried.

It was the first time such a sweeping solution was used to contain a crippling problem that has hampered repeated efforts to save the national sport from total decadence.

***

No need to worry, assured Romasanta, repeating the words of his boss at the POC.

Romasanta said he does not see the possibility of the BAP special case being replicated in other sports associations.

Romasanta said Cojuangco does not see why they would have to use the same solution used in the BAP for other associations.

Of course, there were fears that the rights of proper parties could've been trespassed in the BAP case.

For our part, we would like to think that the Cojuangco solution to the basketball mess came as a result of extreme necessity.

It was done very efficiently, with disruptive personalities quietly put in their proper places.

Still, the POC leadership had to assure there would be no abuse of authority in dealing with future problems.

Responsible media, together with other watchdogs, will have to make sure the Cojuangco godfather-solution does not become the rule of thumb in the Philippine Olympic Committee.

LOOSE BALL
BRAZIL'S Robinho (front) fights for the ball with Guatemala's Gustavo Cabrera during a friendly match as his retiring homage on April 27 at the Pacaembu stadium, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. AFP

REUTERS

ing return

Tabuena, Superals barge into Jr World

MIGUEL Tabuena and Crystal Superal came through with stirring come-from-behind victories even as Tonton Asistio and Jik Jik Abdon held off their pursuers to top their respective divisions in the Samsung Jungolf Tour's Junior World qualifying at the Sherwood Hills Golf Club in Trece Martirez, Cavite.

Superal, 11 strokes behind after three rounds, completed a family hat-trick when she carded a three-over-par 75 to win over Regan de Guzman in the girls Class B division. Crystal totaled 455 against the 461 of de Guzman, who scored 81.

Tabuena proved that he's still the best in his age-group after a closing 67 gave him a runaway nine-shot win in boys Class D. After trailing by eight in the first round, the recently crowned Thailand International titlist finished with a 402 total, far better than the 411 of JR Gonzales (74).

Asistio pulled away with a 34 in the front nine and coasted to a nine-shot victory in boys Class A. He tallied a 70 for a 428 total, beating Mico Yee (74-437) in the tourney also supported by PAL and Unilever.

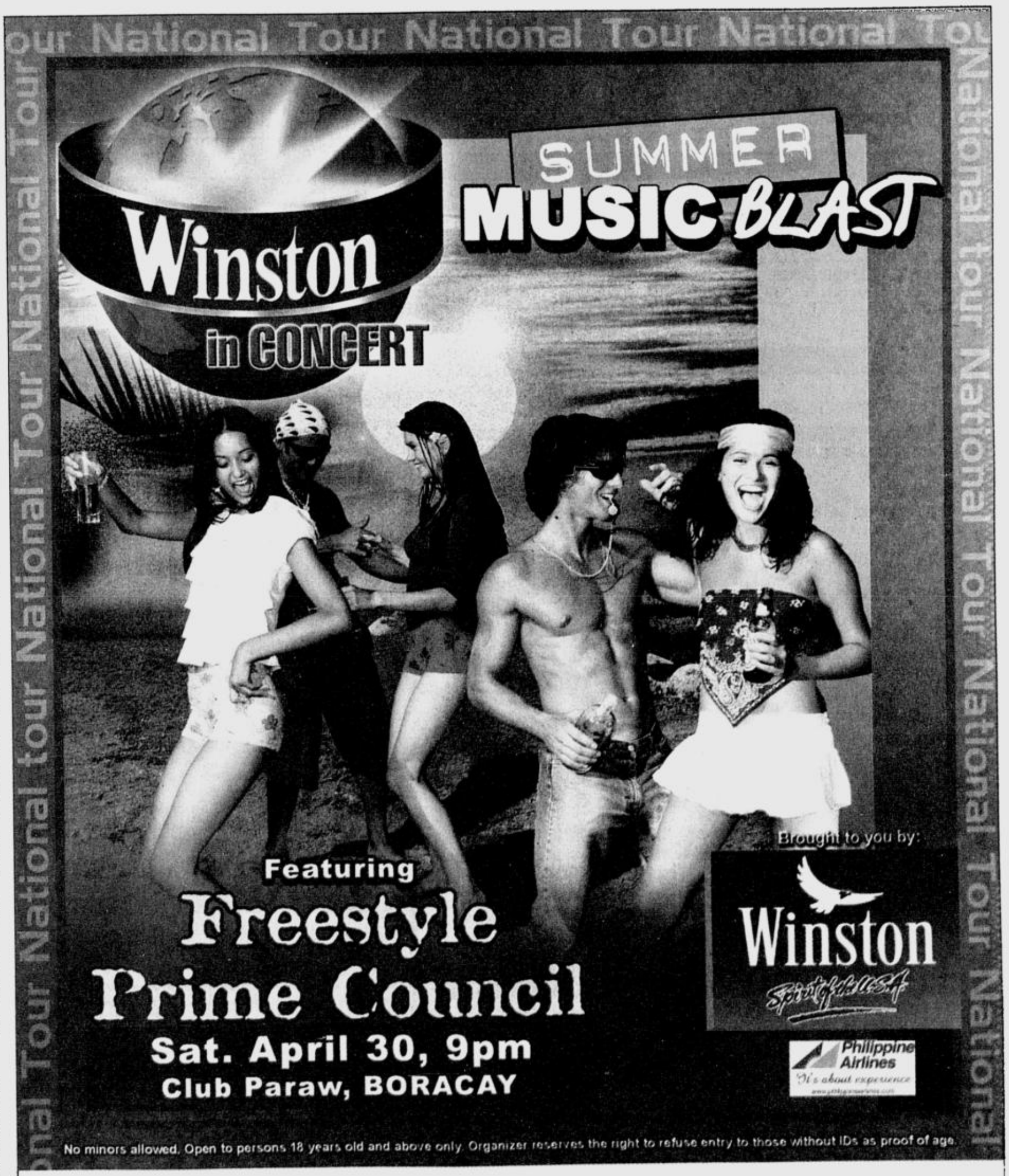
Abdon needed to shrug off the challenge of Adrian Woo to win boys Class B. Abdon struggled with a 79 but it was enough to give him a one-stroke victory.

Wolen and Princess Superal also topped boys Class C and girls Class E to join Crystal in pulling off a family sweep.

The three siblings will be together in the Philippine delegation to the Junior World in San Diego, California this July. The contingent will also include the other winners in Bambee dela Paz, Dottie Ardina, Christina Potenciano, Abby Arevalo and AR Ramos.

The final results:

Class A: Boys: 428 Tonton Asistio 70, 437 Mico Yee 74, 447 Mico Alejandro 77, Matthew Manotoc 78; Girls: 493 Bambee dela Paz 85, 505 Linnel de Villa 84, 509 Kathleen Uy 80; Class B: Boys: 463 JikJik Abdon 79, 464 Adrian Woo 76, 487 Jordan Mamaril 82; Girls: 455 Crystal Superal 75, 461 Regan de Guzman 81, 469 Cyna Rodriguez 83; Class C: Boys: 429 Wolen Superal 73, 479 Marcel Puyat 82, 482 Remo Fueg 77; Girls: 445 Dottie Ardina 73, 490 Maan Legaspi 82, 512 Katya dela Cruz 78; Class D: Boys: 402 Miguel Tabuena 67, 411 JR Gonzales 74, 413 Bino dela Paz 69; Girls: 438 Christina Potenciano 81, 464 Andie Unson 80, 476 Ereina Gabasa 80; Class E: Boys: 348 AR Ramos 56, 369 Tonton Arevalo 62, 376 Miggy Yee 66; Girls: 398 Princess Superal 65, 473 Dana Gonzales 77; Class F: Boys: 408 Ryan Monsalve 93, 602 Zowie Nieves 89, 611 Mikael Robles 93; 408 Abegail Arevalo 67, 426 Lois Kaye Go 67, 426 Janella Buen 66



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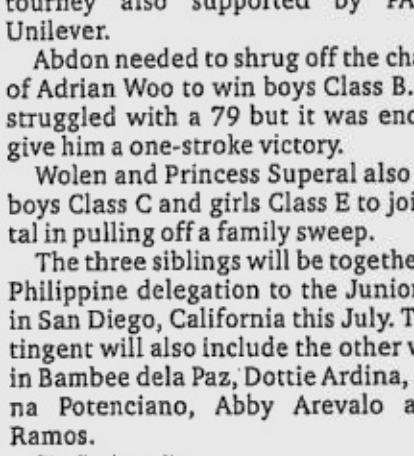

Question of the Week

Three top beneficiaries code-named M1, M2 and JS7, relatives of a top government official, allegedly rake in millions of monthly jueteng money. Your reaction?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX *wil each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! Ü*

inquirer box name/age/city/message.

(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808. Provincial winners can text: inquirer ad name/city/mailing address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

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GALLERIA — 632-9115/16

1 XXX 2 • THX 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30	6 THE WEDDING DATE 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
2 XXX 2 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	7 THE JACKET 1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00
3 THE INTERPRETER 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00	8 SAHARA 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS 10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00	9 THE PACIFIER 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 GUESS WHO? 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	10 SAMARA RING 2 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA — 536-7809 to 12

1 XXX 2	11:05 1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00
2 GUESS WHO? 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	5 THE WEDDING DATE 10:20 12:15 2:10 4:05 6:00 7:55 10:00
3 SAHARA 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50	6 THE INTERPRETER 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 THE JACKET 10:40 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50	7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50

METRO EAST — 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 BOSO 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00	5 THE INTERPRETER 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
2 SAHARA 12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00	6 GUESS WHO? 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:10 8:30 10:30
3 THE JACKET 11:10 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10	7 XXX 2 10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:20
4 THE WEDDING DATE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00	8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS 12:20 3:15 6:10 9:10

NOVALICHES — 935-3229/31

1 XXX 2 1:55 4:05 6:15 8:30	5 GUESS WHO? 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
2 THE INTERPRETER 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25	6 XXX 2 10:40 12:50 3:00 5:10 7:20
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:20	7 RESERVE
4 THE JACKET 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:20	8 RESERVE

PIONEER — 687-5378

1 XXX 2	3 GUESS WHO?
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS	4 THE INTERPRETER

CITISQUARE MALABON — 288-2575

1 HOSTAGE
2 CURSED
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 PARAISO

CAINTA — 240-4661

1 XXX 2
2 THE JACKET
3 SAHARA
4 PARAISO

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STA. ROSA — (049) 837-0907

1 XXX 2
2 GUESS WHO?
3 OK KA, PARE KO
4 SAMARA RING 2
5 ASTERIX AND OBELIX

LIPA — (043) 757-3664 / (043) 312-5870

1 XXX 2
2 PONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 SAMARA RING 2
4 BOOGEYMAN
5 HOSTAGE

DASMARIÑAS — (046) 852-2125 / (046) 416-4332

1 XXX 2
2 GUESS WHO?
3 PARAISO
4 HOSTAGE
5 ASTERIX AND OBELIX

ANGELES — (045) 892-2348

1 XXX 2
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 SAMARA RING 2
4 OK KA, PARE KO

IMUS — (046) 875-3838 / (046) 471-4163

1 XXX 2
2 PARAISO
3 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
4 CURSED
5 BOSO
6 SAHARA

STARMILLS — (045) 875-1927 / (045) 461-5270

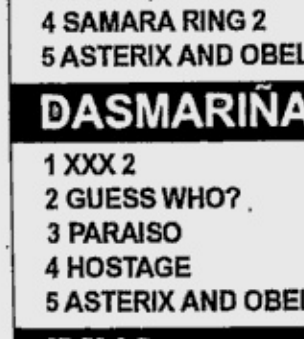
1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 PARAISO
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAMARA RING 2
5 XXX 2
6 XXX 2

BACOLOD — (034) 441-0463 / (034) 441-0455

1 XXX 2
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 XXX 2
4 THE PACIFIER
5 BOOGEYMAN
6 SAMARA RING 2

ILOILO — (033) 336-8070

1 XXX 2
2 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
3 THE PACIFIER
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
5 HIDE AND SEEK
6 SAMARA RING 2



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AYALA CINEMAS

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THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 GUESS WHO	2 XXX 2	3 THE INTERPRETER	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 GUESS WHO	2 THE WEDDING DATE	3 THX THE INTERPRETER 12:10, 2:50, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SAHARA	5 CAN THIS BE LOVE	6 XXX 2	7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 CAN THIS BE LOVE 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00		2 XXX 2 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE INTERPRETER 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX XXX 2 2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:10, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 THE WEDDING DATE 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FINDING NEVERLAND 2:30, 4:30, 6:30 / XXX 2 8:35, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 GUESS WHO 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX XXX 2		2 CAN THIS BE LOVE	
	3 GUESS WHO	4 THE WEDDING DATE	5 THE INTERPRETER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 XXX 2	2 BE COOL	3 CAN THIS BE LOVE	4 FINDING NEVERLAND

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2. Wedding Date
3. Sahara
4. Can This Be Love

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00

5. Ring of Nibelungs
6. Guess Who
7. XXX 2

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MARKET! MARKET!

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April 30 - May 1, 2005
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colors of summer
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MALABON • 6 PM DASMARIÑAS • 4 PM

STA. ROSA • 6 PM

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2 (DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER PG13

3 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE GP

4 (DOLBY) GUESS WHO PG13

PREMIERE

(DOLBY) THE JACKET PG13

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati

Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

2 RING OF NIBELUNGS

3 CAN THIS BE LOVE

4 GUESS WHO

SUPER CINERAMA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) RESERVED

2 RESERVED

3 RESERVED

4 RESERVED

5 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA

(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

3 PARAISO

starmall Movies

www.clickthecity.com.ph

(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 RESERVED

2 RESERVED

3 PARAISO

4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CAN THIS BE LOVE

5 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

METROPOLIS star

www.clickthecity.com.ph

(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

2 PARAISO

3 RESERVED

4 RESERVED

5 (DOLBY) XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

6 CAN THIS BE LOVE

starmall Movies

www.clickthecity.com.ph

(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY) MASK-2 SON OF THE MASK

2 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY) WEDDING DATE

2 (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

3 (DTS) SPANGLISH

4 GOLD (DTS) GUESS WHO

5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER

6 GOLD (DOLBY) PACIFIER

7 GOLD (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

8 (DIGITAL) RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

9 (DIGITAL) SAHARA

10 (DIGITAL) CAN THIS BE LOVE

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GUESS WHO

XXX: STATE OF THE UNION

CAN THIS BE LOVE

FINDING NEVERLAND

THE INTERPRETER

THE WEDDING DATE

THE PACIFIER

SAHARA

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION

3 SAHARA

4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

5 THE INTERPRETER

Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

3 BOOGEY MAN

4 RESERVED

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470

1 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

2 CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DTS EX) HIDE AND SEEK

4 SAMARA (RING 2)

Cine Nepo

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

3 (DOLBY) HIDE AND SEEK

4 (DTS) SAMARA (RING 2)

Cine Nepo

(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 SAHARA

3 (DOLBY) MISS CONGENIALITY

4 (DTS) BE COOL

Centre Plaza Cinema

(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 SAHARA

2 MISS CONGENIALITY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER

2 (DOLBY) XXX 2

3 (DOLBY) GUESS WHO

4 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE

CINEMA 2000

Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 GUESS WHO

2 (DTS) CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

4 SAMARA (RING - 2)

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE

2 (DOLBY) SAMARA (RING - 2)

3 (DTS) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

4 GUESS WHO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1 SAHARA

2 CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DOLBY) MISS CONGENIALITY

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 ALONE IN THE DARK

2 CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DOLBY) SAHARA

4 (DTS) BE COOL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

2 CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DOLBY) SPONGEBOB

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (DOLBY) MASK-2 SON OF THE MASK

2 PARAISO

3 MAPUSOK

4 (DTS) LEFT BEHIND

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) SAMARA (RING - 2)

2 CAN THIS BE LOVE

3 (DTS) KAULAYAW

4 OK KA PARE KO

5

Mega Center Mall (Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 SAMARA (RING - 2)

2 FINDING NEVERLAND

3 (DTS) SAHARA

4 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

2 BOOGEY MAN

3 SPONGEBOB

4 CAN THIS BE LOVE

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 PARAISO

2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

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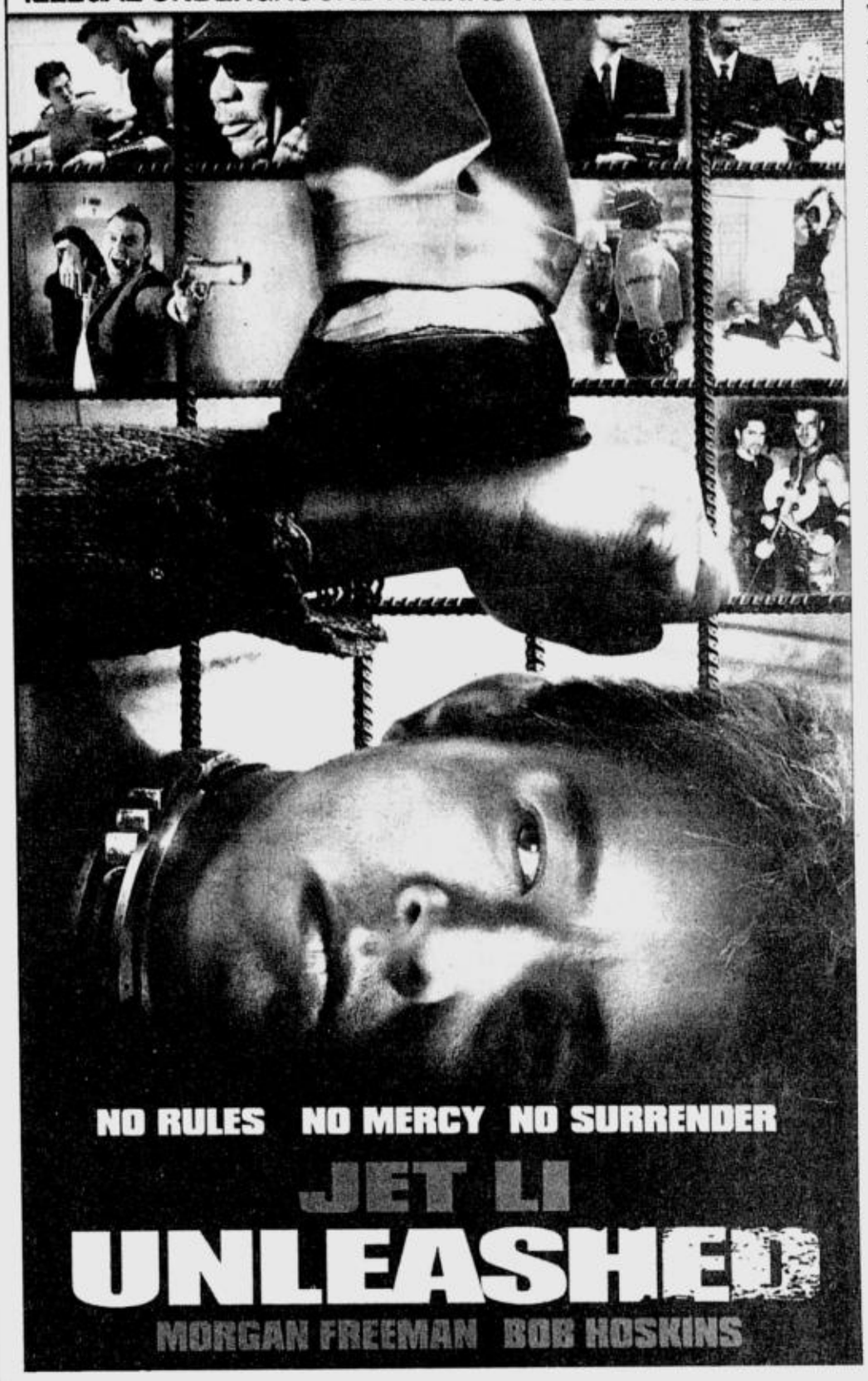

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GUESS WHO 1:10 / 3:45 / 6:20 / 9:00	THE INTERPRETER 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
XXX: STATE OF THE UNION 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30	THE WEDDING DATE 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
CAN THIS BE LOVE 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30	THE PACIFIER 1:55 / 4:15 / 6:35 / 8:55
FINDING NEVERLAND 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00	SAHARA 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1 CAN THIS BE LOVE 11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25	4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS 11:15 / 2:10 / 5:05 / 8:10
2 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION 11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25	5 THE INTERPRETER 12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
3 SAHARA 11:40 / 2:30 / 5:20 / 8:10	DOLBY DIGITAL DTS SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS

MOSSIMO BIKINI SUMMIT 2005 — April 30, Saturday, 8pm

2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 1 — 4:15pm Alaska vs. Coke / 6:35pm Shell vs. Ginebra

2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 4 — 4:45pm Coke vs. Purefoods / 7:35pm Talk n' Text vs. Red Bull

KEVYN LETTAU: MEMORIES OF LOVE — May 14, Saturday, 8pm

CENTER EVENTS

ALI MALL	All Mall Wild & Wacky Sale April 29, 30 & May 1
FOOD GALLERY & FOOD PLAZA	Merienda Fiesta- merienda treats for only P25 plus FREE Iced Tea (Monday to Friday, 2pm – 5pm)
	Fiesta Ng Halo Halo, special halo halo for only P25 with every P75 food purchase
GATEWAY MALL	Get a FREE Tropicana Twister with every purchase of a Meximelt and 16 oz. Pepsi

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SEAGFC meeting today

By Musong R. Castillo

THE SOUTHEAST Asian Games Federation Council convenes today in a crucial meeting that could very well determine the Philippines' chances in winning the SEAG overall title later this year.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco formally takes over leadership of the SEAGFC when Celso Dayrit resigns at the start of the meeting at the Hyatt Manila.

Ten other countries will be represented in the gathering, which will decide whether or not the current roster of events, or gold medals at stake, will remain at 388.

At least 20 national sports associations have requested for additional events, and the Rules and Sports Committee of the POC, chaired by Go Teng Kok of chess and athletics, has already presented this to the executive committee of the SEAGFC.

The exact number of the new events has been kept under wraps until the start of the meeting, but Go said that wushu is seeking the most number of official events.

From 18 in the last SEAG in Vietnam, Go said wushu wants to put up as many as 30 gold medals for the Manila edition, set to fire off Nov. 27.

Tennis is also seeking the addition of three more events from its regular four.

Meanwhile, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday welcomed the SEAGFC delegates and assured them that, although austere, the preparations for the Manila SEA Games are being done with strict compliance to international standards.

Palawan Festival

PUERTO Princesa City becomes the center of attention anew when the sixth Karagatan Festival reels off today at the Tagkawayan Beach.

With Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn spearheading the event, the festival will showcase Palawan as a leading tourist destination.

The festival will feature competitions in motor boat race, marathon, swimming, beach volleyball, fishing, kite-flying, tug-of-war, sand sculpture, coastal clean-up, tribal dance and bikini contest. A beach concert will cap the event.

Mayor Hagedorn is being assisted by Manuel "Boy" Macasaet and motocross legend Edward "Butch" Chase. Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes and Rep. Abraham Mitra have also thrown their support to the event. Thousands of local and foreign visitors are expected to watch the festival also supported by San Miguel Corp., Smart, Norkis Yamaha, JAKA and Asian Spirit.

SPORTS

Suico stops Thai in 4 rounds, keeps OPBF title

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

LAPU-LAPU CITY—With reigning Ring Magazine featherweight king Manny Pacquiao watching, World Boxing Council No. 3 Randy "Komong Bato" Suico retained his Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation super featherweight title with an impressive fourth-round technical knockout win over Thai challenger Muangfahlek Kiatwichean Wednesday.

Suico, who is hoping to challenge WBC super featherweight king Marco Antonio Barrera next, unleashed a thunderous three-punch combination that cut down Muangfahlek for good in one minute 53 seconds of the fourth stanza.

It was an impressive showing before an SRO crowd by Suico on a day the city commemorated the epic victory of he country's first warrior hero, Lapu-Lapu.

In the undercard, World Boxing Association No. 1 and mandatory challenger Yukka Gejon of Wakee Salud Stable showed why he is fighting for the world title in September as he decked Thai Namchai Thaksinisan thrice en route to a second-round stoppage.

Gejon bucked down to business immediately, sending the Thai down with a right hook in the first round. Another right hook in the second downed the Thai again, and when the fight resumed, Gejon unleashed his bread-and-butter right uppercut to put the Thai away.

Games and Amusements Board chair Eric Buhain and GAB boxing chief Emmanuel Flores were impressed by Suico's victory although both said the Filipino has to do some more fine-tuning to be able to beat an icon like Barrera.

Suico and Muangfahlek looked tentative in the opening round, but action soon picked up in the second round as Suico pressed the attack against the slippery Thai.

With Suico repeatedly missing in the third frame, the Thai gained confidence and landed several shots of his own.

But Suico showed his explosive power in the fourth, catching Muangfahlek with a left that staggered the Thai against the ropes. Suico then swiftly came up with a right-left combo that sent the Thai down for good.

In other bouts, Rowel Mangan prevailed on a 97-93, 97-93, 100-93 decision win over JR Sollano; Louie Bantigue TKO'd William Macas in the third and Gabriel Pumar stopped Emer Barrientos in the fourth.

Manny sues M&M

Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

RING Magazine featherweight king Manny Pacquiao yesterday announced that he has filed through his US lawyers a case against promoter Murad Muhammad and M&M Sports, Inc. in a New York court for allegedly withholding the Filipino's earnings from fights.

PACQUIAO

This confirmed what Pacquiao had told members of the media in Cebu City the other day that his American lawyers have already completed the necessary paperwork, which also accused Rod and Roberto Nazario of conspiring with Murad, although the two Filipino business managers were not included in the charge sheet.

"The papers are complete, but I don't want to comment based on the advice of my lawyers," Pacquiao told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

The lawsuit alleged that Muhammad had conspired with the Nazarios to divert a percentage of Pacquiao's purses to a shell company that left the boxer with unsettled accounts with the Internal Revenue Service.

The complaint added that the disadvantageous arrangement among M&M Sports, Muhammad and the business managers resulted in their agreeing to purses for Pacquiao that were significantly below market.

In essence, the business managers allegedly made more money by stealing 30 percent or more from Pacquiao's purses than they would have earned from a straight 10-percent fee on properly negotiated purses.

According to the complaint, this scheme against Pacquiao was furthered by M&M Sports' refusal to provide the Filipino champ the disclosures to which he is entitled by the Muhammad Ali Act.

Cheated

"It has taken me awhile to come to terms with the fact that I have been cheated by people whom I trusted," Pacquiao stated in the lawsuit, copies of which were released to the media. "I intend to see this suit to the bitter end so that I can recover every dollar that was stolen from me, as well as help protect other fighters from being taken advantage of by Mr. Muhammad."

"As for the immediate future, my fans can rest assured that I will be fighting soon, but not with Murad Muhammad or M&M Sports as my promoter. As of today, I have instructed my new management to begin negotiating for my next fight and fights thereafter. I will never fight again for Murad Muhammad and M&M Sports," Pacquiao said.

Judd Burstein of Judd Burstein, P.C., a New York firm, and Keith Davidson of Davidson & Associates, P.L.C. of Beverly Hills, filed the suit in behalf of Pacquiao. Davidson is part of Pacquiao's new management team, which also includes Shelly Finkel and Nick Khan.

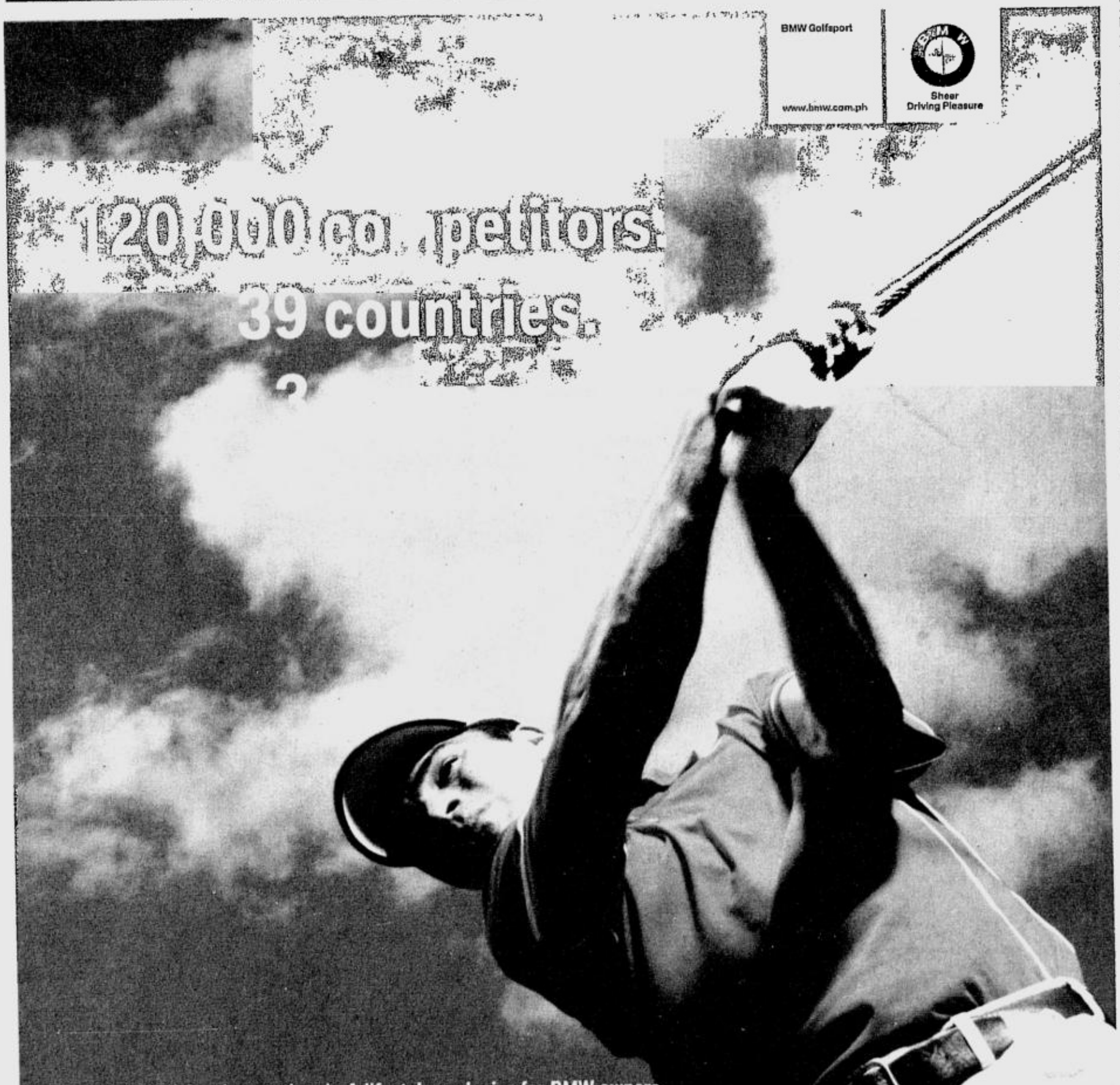
"The complaint we filed today is just a first salvo, fired with only limited available information. If the discovery process in the case proceeds as I expect it will, we will be amending the complaint by adding extensive new factual allegations and a likely claim under the federal racketeering law," Burstein stated.

Pacquiao is also fighting to recover his 40-percent share in the pay-per-view proceeds from his recent bout against Erik Morales of Mexico, which Muhammad claimed for himself.

Meanwhile, Murad Muhammad angrily reacted to the case filed by Pacquiao against him, calling it a conspiracy to topple him from controlling Pacquiao's affairs.

In a related development, North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol, who has recently made a deal with Muhammad to boost WBC No. 5 Prince Gabi's career, yesterday assured fans that his agreement with Murad does not necessarily constitute a betrayal to Pacquiao's cause.

Piñol said that since Murad had offered to help his boxer, he openly welcomed the idea, considering that the American promoter is the only one showing interest in Filipino boxers.



Turkish boxer trips Melligen

LIGHT welterweight Mark Jason Melligen absorbed a lopsided loss from a Turkish pug at the Ahmet Comert International Boxing Championships in Istanbul, Turkey.

From a 7-7 standoff after two rounds, the Filipino found himself on the receiving end of the scoring and ended up losing, 12-29, to bow out of the medal bouts.

The loss left only light flyweight Godfrey Castro standing for Team Philippines, and RP head coach Nolito Velasco and assistant coach Vicente Arcenal could only hope for the best when Castro battles a fighter from Kazakhstan in his semifinals bout on Wednesday.

Globe PLATINUM

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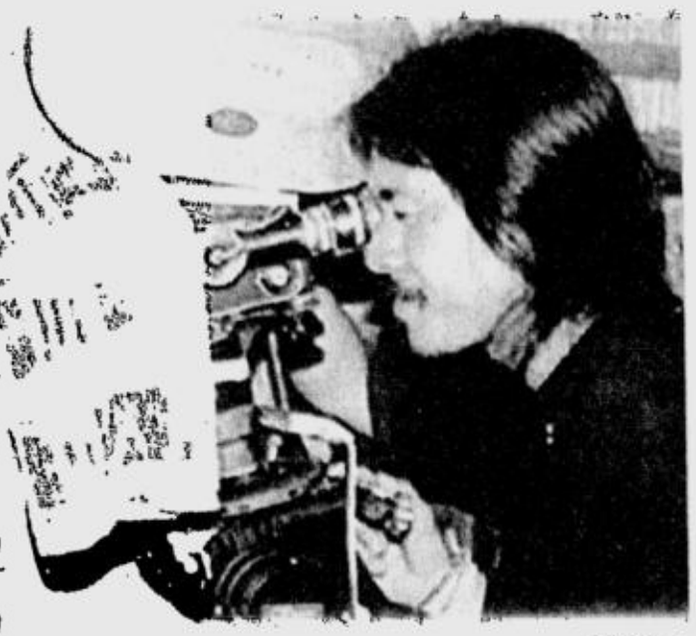
BYE-BYE ANTOK!
STANDARD Exhaust Fan

Critics cite 10-hour digital movie

It's Nora vs Vilma, Judy Ann vs Claudine in Gawad Urian



LAV Diaz

Cesar Montano's 'Panaghoy sa Suba' gets lion share of nominations. Piolo Pascual is Best Actor nominee for 'Milan'

SCREEN rivals Nora Aunor and Vilma Santos, and Judy Ann Santos and Claudine Barretto are pitted in the 28th annual Gawad Urian given out by film critics.

Aunor is nominated for "Naglalayag," in which she plays a judge who finds herself in a relationship with a younger man, played by Yul Servo, who is also nominated for Best Actor.

Santos is nominated for "Mano Po 3: My Love," where she memorably plays a Chinese-Filipino anti-crime advocate who reunites with a long-lost love, played by Christopher de Leon, a Best Actor contender.

Breaking ground

Claudine Barreto is cited for "Milan," where she plays a cynical migrant worker in Italy who falls in love with a countryman looking for his wife. The man is played touchingly by Piolo Pascual, another Best Actor nominee.

Judy Ann Santos is nominated for playing the latent lesbian in the psychological study, "Sabel."

Other than the high-profile rivalry between the two senior movie icons and two young actresses, the biggest news is that "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino," the 10-hour digital film by Lav Diaz, has been nominated for Best Film.

In citing the movie, the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the society of respected film critics that hands out the Gawad Urian, has broken ground since "Ebolusyon" is a digital video feature that has not been transferred on celluloid.

Other movies that have been previously cited by the Manunuri—such as Mark Meily's "Crying Ladies" and Laurice Guillen's "Santa Santita"—were made on digital video but transferred on celluloid.

Its extended length—more than 10 hours, actually—also ensures that "Ebolusyon" cannot be shown in mainstream commercial theaters.

Made over nearly 10 years, "Ebolusyon" tackles the history of the Philippines from martial law up to the present as seen from the experience of a boy who was saved from the garbage dump by a woman out of her wits. A contemporary epic, it has been shown to wide acclaim at film festivals in Rotterdam, Toronto, and San Francisco.

"Ebolusyon" is also nominated for direction and screenplay (by Diaz), actor (Ronnie Lazaro and Pen Medina), supporting actor (Roeder), supporting actress (Angie Ferro), cinematography (Bahaghari, Larry Manda and Paul Tanedo), production design (Patty Eustaquio, Rishab and Jun Sabayton), and sound (Rafael Luna and Bob Macabenta).

But the lion's share of the nominations went to "Panaghoy sa Suba" (CM Films), Cesar Montano's brave World War II epic set in Bohol with Cebuano dialogue.

Aside from Best Picture, "Panaghoy" is nominated for Best Director and Actor (Montano), Screenplay (Cris Vertido), Supporting Actor (Jacky Woo), Supporting Actress (Rebecca Lusterio and Juliana Palermo), Cinematography (Ely Cruz), Editing (Renato de Leon), Production Design (Allan Leyres and Ron Heritan), Music (Nonong Buencamino), and Sound (Angie Reyes and Nestor Mutia).

Quiet Cebuano film

And aside from Barreto's and Pascal's nominations, "Milan" (Star Cinema), one of the biggest hits of 2004, is also nominated for Best Picture, Director (Olivia Lamasan), Screenplay (Raymond Lee and Lamasan), Actor (Piolo Pascual), and Editing (Marya Ignacio).

"Sabel" (Regal) is nominated for Best Picture, Director (Joel Lamangan), Screenplay (Ricardo Lee), Supporting Actor (Wendell Ramos), and Music (Jesse Lucas).

"Minsan Pa," the quiet film in Cebuano by Jeffrey Jeturian, is nominated for Best Actor (Jomari Yllana), Supporting Actress (Ara Mina, and Music (Lucien Letaba and Arnel de Pano).

Rites set

Dennis Trillo is nominated for Best Supporting Actor as the cross-dressing World War II homosexual in "Aishite Masu." Fellow newcomer Iza Calzado is nominated for Best Supporting Actress for the horror film, "Sigaw."

The winners will be known during the 28th Gawad Urian on June 4 at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo.

The Manunuri is chaired by Lito B. Zulueta, arts editor of the INQUIRER and professor of journalism, literature and film theory of the University of Santo Tomas.

Members are Dean Nicanor Tiongson of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communications (UP-CMC); Ramon Magsaysay laureate Bienvenido Lumbera; television personality Butch Francisco; Mario Hernando, editor of the Sunday Malaya and member of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board; Prof. Gigi Javier-Alfonso of the UP-CMC film department and UP Open University; Prof. Mike Rapatan of the Department of Communication of De la Salle University; and Prof. Rolando Tolentino, director of the UP Film Institute.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Urian citations /A3-1
- Only IN Hollywood /A3-1
- Wow Maling Mali /A3-2

Decena says senator may be interfering with Salvador cases

By Marinel R. Cruz

"I FEEL relieved that justice is slowly being served. I am the victim here. Phillip may have backers in the government, but I have strong evidence against him," businesswoman Cristina Castillo-Decena said of former partner, Phillip Salvador, after a warrant for the actor's arrest was issued on Wednesday.

The warrant, issued by Judge Elizabeth Yu-Guray, is in connection with one of the three estafa cases Decena filed against Phillip and brother Ramon last year.

Phillip was allowed to post bail of P40,000.

According to Decena, Phillip failed to attend the court hearing last Wednesday due to high blood pressure. Instead, the actor sent a medical certificate, which the court did not honor. "The fiscal said high blood pressure is a common ailment," Decena pointed out. "His certificate wasn't even notarized."

The case was in connection with the amount totaling $100,000 that the Salvador brothers allegedly received from Decena for the freight and remittance business she helped put up with them in December 2001.

Ramon pleaded not guilty during the hearing.

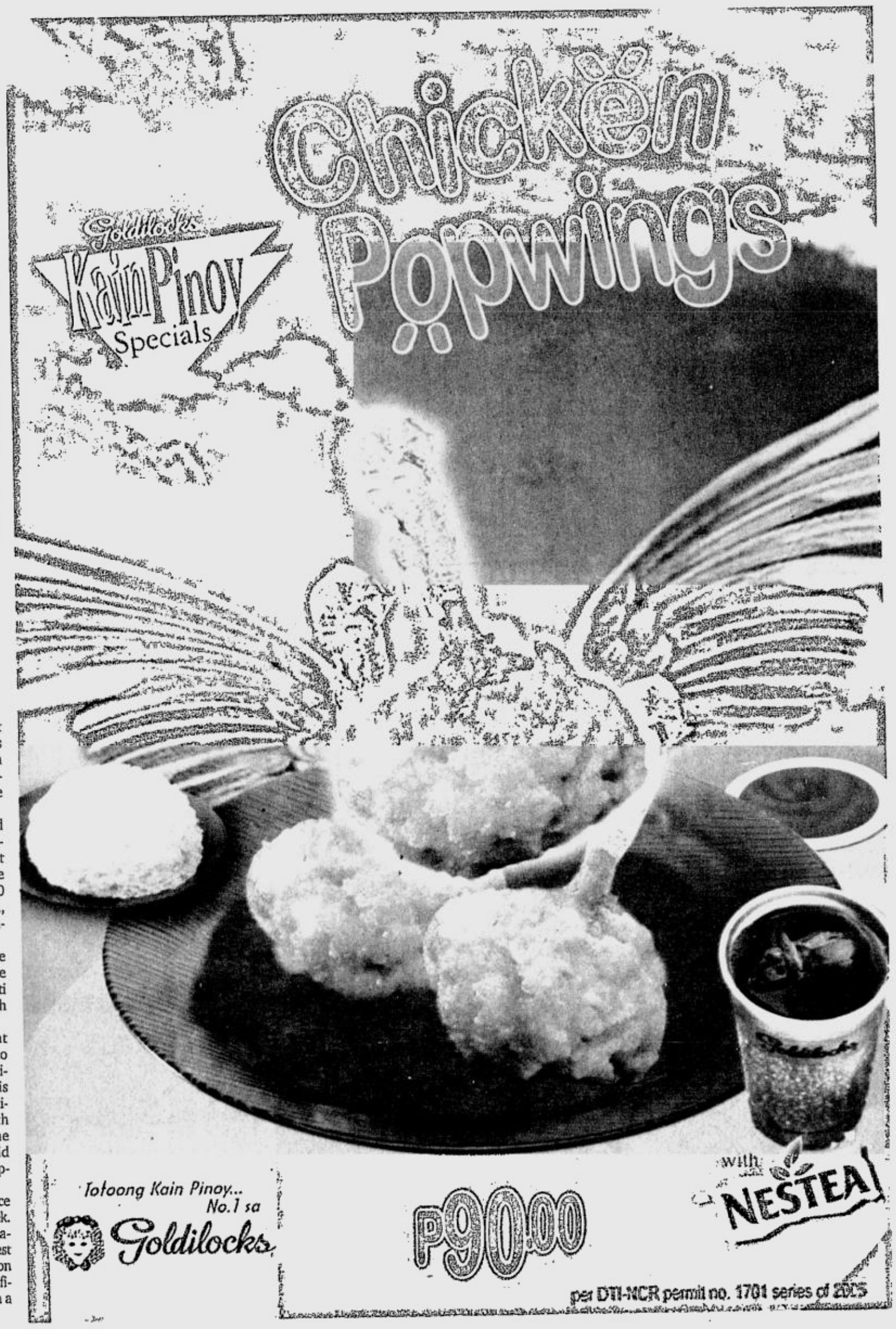
Although she was satisfied with the issuance of the arrest warrant, Decena said, she was worried about a rumor that a "highly placed government official" is trying to interfere in the disposition of the charges.

The two other cases Decena filed against the Salvadors were in connection with 1) the P15 million that she claimed she lent Phillip more than two years ago, and 2) the 10 jeepneys that she bought in 2001, supposedly for management by Ramon.

Decena initially filed the first case with the Department of Justice. The DOJ referred the case to the Makati City prosecutor's office last March 2004.

"A reliable source told me that a senator is doing all he can to reverse the earlier court decisions," said Decena. "I hope this isn't true. These cases are meritorious. I will fight it out with them even if we get to the Supreme Court. I am not afraid because everything I say is supported by documents."

Decena said she met with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez last week. She said Gonzalez issued a certification that says the Salvadors' request for a review of the court decisions on the last two cases "are already for final review and shall be resolved in a short period of time."



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New Italian chef's masterpieces at Edsa Shangri La's paparazzi

AS A PRELUDE to his grand debut, Edsa Shangri-La's Paparazzi unveils the thrilling masterpieces of its new resident Italian chef.

Among his new creations in the daily lunch buffet and dinner la carte menu are oven-roasted langoustines with limoncello dressing, grilled sirloin steak in rosemary infused olive oil, pan-roasted sea bass in a crustaceous jus served with potato brandade, swordfish medallions with tomato confit and grilled polenta and homemade tortelli pasta stuffed with pumpkin, Mostarda and Amaretti cookies in light butter and parmesan sauce.

Watch out for more exciting surprises from Manila's premier Italian restaurant. Located at Edsa Shangri-La's Mezzanine Level, Paparazzi is open for lunch from 12 noon to 2:30 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Sundays and for dinner from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily. For inquiries, call Restaurant Reservations at 633 8888 extensions 2738 and 2739.

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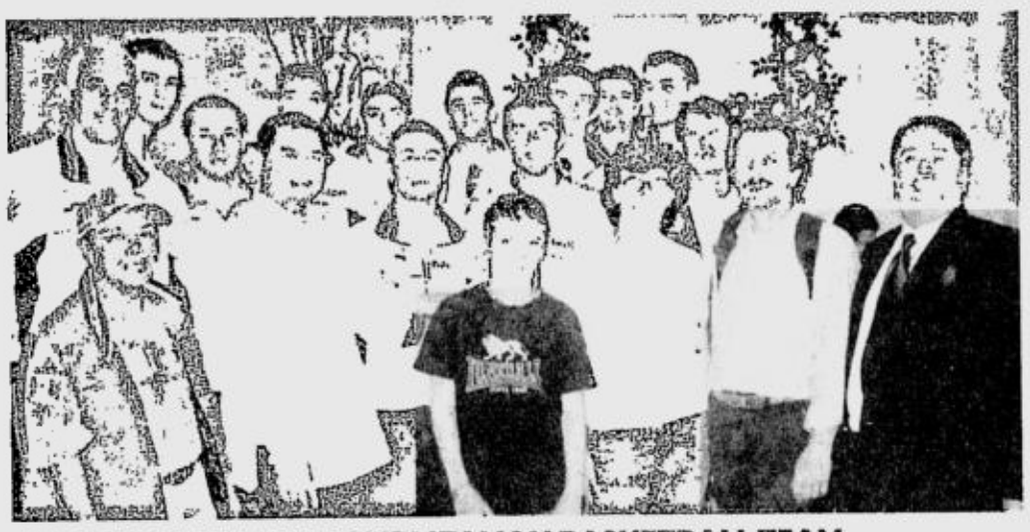

ASTORIA PLAZA WELCOMES ITALIAN BASKETBALL TEAM
Hotel manager Ping Regalado and director for marketing Nel Ruiz welcome the 3 time champion Stranges Papo Movie Italian basketball team at the hotel's lobby. Astoria Plaza is the official hotel of the team players.

'All for Mom' at Dusit Hotel Nikko

ONE of the best ways to celebrate Mother's Day is to give mothers a well-deserved break from their every day routine. And what better way to let herself loose than relaxing at Dusit Hotel Nikko through the hotel's "All for Mom" promotion.

Mothers may avail of the "All for Mom" Wellness room package where they can enjoy buffet breakfast for two persons at The Café, surprise mother's day gift, and 10 percent discount in all F&B outlets (except room service and mini bar). Mothers availing of the "All for Mom" Wellness room package would be entitled to one (1) raffle coupon (per room per night stay) for a chance to win fabulous prizes like luxury accommodations in Pearl Farm Beach Resort for three (3) days and two (2) nights as grand prize (airfare not included), an exclusive retreat in a casita at Club Punta Fuego (second prize) and Taal Vista Hotel (third prize).

The "All for Mom" Wellness room package starts at P5,800 nett for a Deluxe Room, P6,200 nett for a Corner Deluxe Room, P7,700 for an Executive Suite and P8,800 nett for a Landmark Suite. Valid for bookings made from May 1 to 15 only. For inquiries and reservations, please call 867-3333.

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For as low as P1,500+ per person on twin-sharing basis, one can enjoy the hotel's elegant one-bedroom suite inclusive of sumptuous buffet breakfast. The highlights of such an elegant but affordable accommodation are its Italian-inspired rooms and suites with separate entertainment area with videoke facility, high-speed Internet access, IDD/NDD telephone system, well-stocked mini-bar, cable TV, room service, laundry and dry cleaning services, plus its newly installed safety deposit box in every room.

EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL'S SUMMER SALES BLITZ
The Executive Plaza Hotel executives recently had a successful five-day Sales Blitz where they visited top corporate companies, government offices, and travel agencies in Marikina, Bulacan, Batangas, Cavite and Laguna. They also visited the various airlines, taxi associations and the airport in Manila. The activity's main objective was to promote the different rooms and banquet packages of the Hotel, as well as to offer special rates to individual and group clients. Shown in the photo are (from left) Erickson Gargarita - account manager, Edz Lazatin - account manager, Ching de Castro - banquet and catering sales manager, Arabelle Del Rosario - banquet account manager, Lady Lourdes Soriano - account manager, Ninnette Soliman - sales manager, Verna Ramarama - senior account manager, Kristine Paras - account manager and Renjie Musni - account manager.

A 'Black and White' affair at the Waterfront

COCKTAILS shoved off the grandiose affair dubbed Black and White, A Charter Club Presentation of the Waterfront Hotel Toastmasters Club at the Pacific Ballroom of Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino. Guests sauntered into a ballroom decked in yards and yards of black cloth hanging from the second floor balconies while in its midst was a cylindrical white guaze tent housing impeccably white table settings.

Over mundane talk, the fine 5-course meal flowed like a beautiful waltz from Lucullus Salad to Cream of Broccoli with Swiss cheese and almonds, followed by a refreshing lemon sorbet to wash out the palate and a sumptuous entrée of stuffed chicken breast with prawn mousse and nantua sauce. All through out, Bacchus would have approved of the free-flowing wine. Mango crème brulee, pralines and petit fours brought dining to a gracious close as Toastmasters District Governor DTM Johnny Uy ceremoniously handed over Waterfront Toastmasters Club's Charter Certificate to Waterfront Airport Hotel and Casino's hotel manager, TM Hembler Mendoza. Lights and Gavel were presented to Hembler by ATM-B Nolie Espina and the satiny gold club banner was unfurled with much pomp and ceremony by TM Agnes Lucente.

To become a Toastmaster is to imbue all that defines a good communicator. A tall order to be sure and a commitment that Club president TM Hembler Mendoza foreswore to be "a daily companion" while he and lovely wife Karen stood at oath before all. With the club mission of "providing a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turns foster self-confidence and personal growth", Toastmasters International District 75 promises to be the toast of the community.

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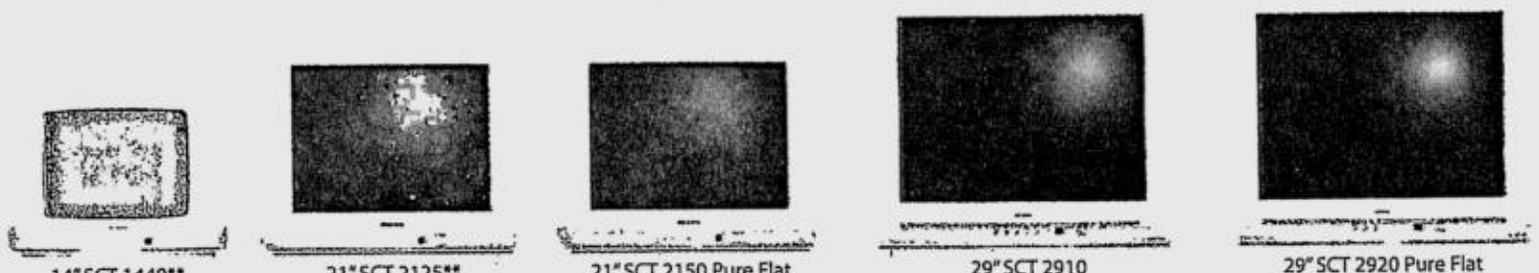

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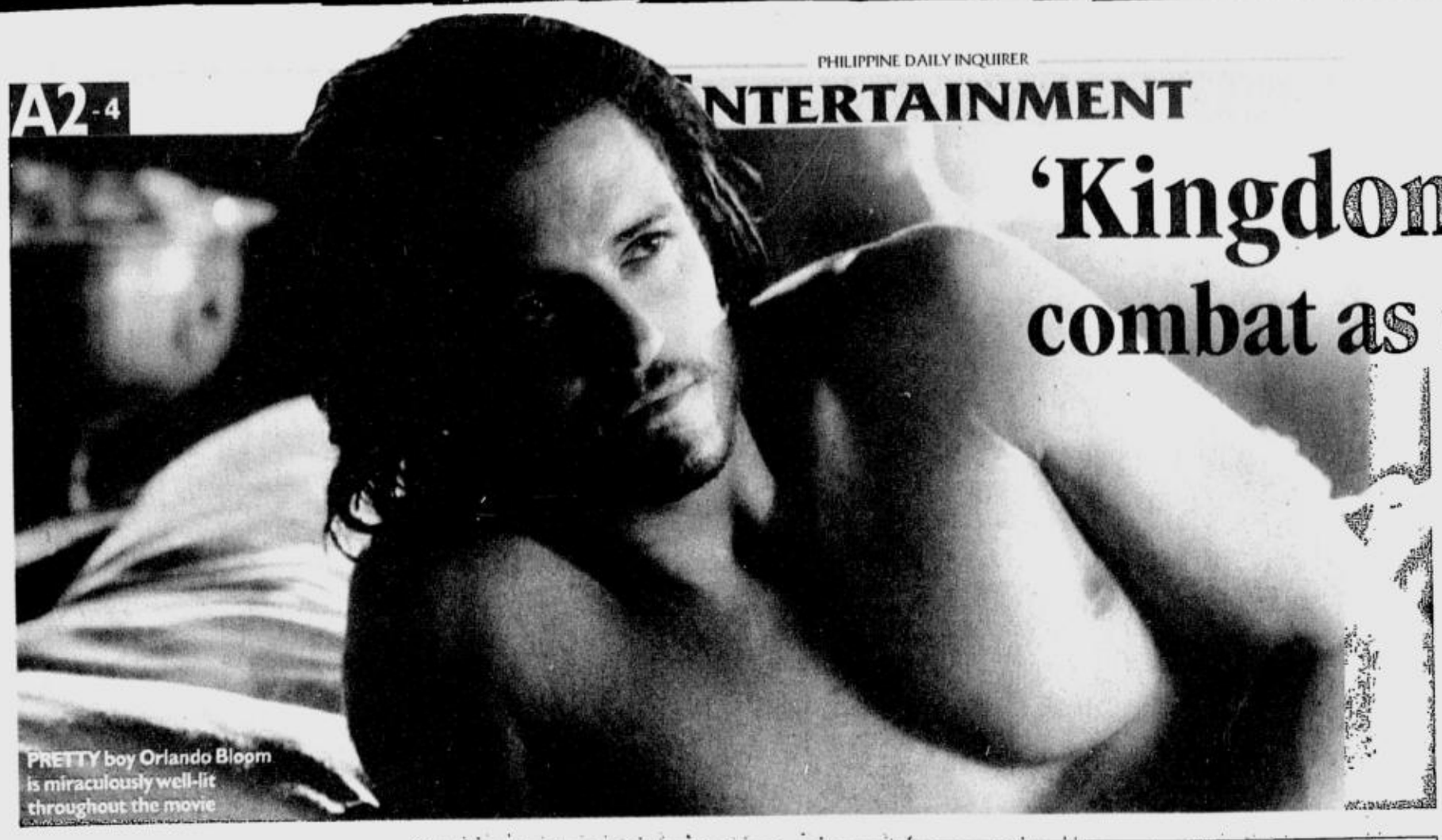
Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4.25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5.10 PM)	Naruto (5.35 PM)	Vidoking	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Sprits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	TBA			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	TNA Impact		Bilboard On-Air	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Hungry Heart	Knockout	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Dama	All About Eve (8.45 PM)	Full House (9.15 PM)		Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hay Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Crime & Punishment		Sports Illustrated		Biggest Loser		Newswatch Now			
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		Vietnam Revisited (2003 SEG Review)		One-On-One	The Regional Bilbards		IBC News Tonite	Pulis Na Paleban	GMA The Working President
JackTV		WWE Velocity		Thunder Box		Rastol	Ozzy & Drix	Mucha Luchal	The Sib Show	Stargate SG1		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		Wow	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	1, 2, 3	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Star MYX	Club MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		JOX	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Amsted Development	Significant Others	Joan Of Arcadia		Average Joe		Entertainment Tonight	The Insidor	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		All My Life				Honey Nasa Langit Na Ba Ako		Annabelle Huggins, Ruben Abaiza Tragedy				Huwag Mong Ubusin Ang Bait Ko				Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon			
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans	Justice League	Wazzup Wazzup		Barkada Nights		Playing It Straight		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		The Contender		The Contender		30 Seconds To Fame	30 Seconds To Fame	7 Days (Season III)		Alias (Season III)		Hollywood's Greatest Stunts	E Buzz	Record Setters					
Star World	Cops	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	Weird TV	Really Caught In The Act		Friends	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Welcome To Mars		Asteroid! The Doomsday Rock		Mission: Mars		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		The Dark Side Of Chemps/Welcome To Mars/Dawn Of The Maya		Zambezi Troop/Asteroid! The Doomsday Rock/Quest For Phoenicians	
Solar Sports				NBA Fan Favorite		WTA '05 Pacific Life Open Indian Wells, USA				In This Corner		NBA Playoffs First Round					GWS Ep.17-2005		
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Moto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest	Revealed With Jules Asner		It's Good To Be	Life & Style		Guess Who's Coming To Dcorate			
HBO		The Great Outdoors			Blankman (4.20 PM)			The Secret Life Of Zoey			Ghost Ship			Congo			Mr. Deeds (10.45PM)		
Star Movies		Comic Book Villains			Captain Corelli's Mandolin					La Divorce				Van Wilder: Party Liason			Underworld		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Mucha Luchal	Teen Titans	Toon Pick	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Star Wars: Clone Wars		Dexter's Laboratory (11.15PM)	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Asian Tour: BMW Asian Open Day2				Winter X Games IX-Day1 Prt2 Mt. Aspen Co USA				Goals!	World Pool Trick Shot Masters '04				2004 Spinwitoonral Table Tennis C'ships	Sportscenter Asia	Goals!	NFL Draft		Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Unfabulous Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax		Secret Of The Incas (3.15 PM)		Mother, May I Sleep With Danger?				A League Of Their Own (6.50 PM)				Sniper 2			Cabin Fever (10.40PM)				
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Sue Thomas: F B Eye		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Sue Thomas: F B Eye		Colt			Wife Swap (10.35PM)		The District (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Monster Garage		American Chopper		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Crime Night	
Sports Plus		Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf Day Final Round				Liberty Mutual Highlights		Italia Sofia A				World Poker Tour Ep 14 Championships				Inside the PGA	Shell Houston Open Highlights		Zurich Classic of New Orleans Day1
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Telodyaryo	Value Vision		GSIS Member's Hour		Network Forum		Telodyaryo		9th Tinig Awards				Ugnayang Pambansa	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



PRETTY boy Orlando Bloom is miraculously well-lit throughout the movie

'Kingdom' come, combat as reflection

Sir Ridley Scott's latest is the logical evolution of his 'Black Hawk Down' and 'Gladiator'

By Ruel S. De Vera

SIR RIDLEY Scott has examined various aspects of human nobility in a phalanx of often violent, always engrossing, tableaus of conflict and mortality. From the bleak futurism of "Blade Runner" to the chilling contrasts of "Hannibal," Scott revels in dissections of heroism and the price to be paid for it, particularly in periods of great unrest and institutionalized jingoism. It's combat as reflection.

"Kingdom of Heaven" fits that mold snugly as the logical evolution of the gritty, modern recreation that is "Black Hawk Down" and the sweeping, historical ballad that is "Gladiator."

REVIEW

The battlefield is Jerusalem in 1186, with the Christian King Baldwin holding the Holy City through an uneasy peace with the Saracen King Saladin. While political machinations, greed and necessity ignite the combustible landscape, Scott's "Kingdom" is more about honor and ingenuity. Square in the crossbow crosshairs is the blacksmith Balian (pretty boy Orlando Bloom from "The Lord of the Rings"), who seeks redemption and his destiny on a Crusade, together with his long-lost father, Baron Goddfrey of Ibelin (Liam Neeson, now the go-to guy for fighting mentors in everything from "Star Wars" to "Batman Begins").

Meatiest role

Now a knight, Balian comes to Jerusalem and is eventually called to duty in the city's defense. Along the way, Balian must deal with the affections of Princess Sibylla (newcomer Eva Green), the ire of Sibylla's husband the deceitful Guy de Lusignan ("The Bourne Supremacy's" Martin Csokas). And as the armies meet in the middle with a thunderous crash, "Kingdom" ponders visually how a man may stay honorable on a battlefield that holds no quarter for idealism. It is not so much a question of religion and creed, but a question of courage and humanity, as exemplified by Godfrey's oath: "Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Speak the truth, always, even if it leads to your death. Safeguard the helpless and do no wrong."

This is by far Bloom's meatiest role and he invests a sense of gravitas and thoughtfulness in what could easily have been the cardboard cutout (also, curiously a blacksmith) he played in "Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl." While he stays miraculously well-lit throughout the movie, Bloom is convincing as the photogenic embodiment of Scott's heroic ideal. A superior supporting cast adds ammunition to the onscreen acting arsenal: Neeson, Jeremy Irons, David Thewlis, Brendan Gleeson, Ghassan Massoud and Alexander Siddig.

And while William Monahan's script is surprisingly straightforward, it is very accessible and Scott's focus keeps "Kingdom" on resolute course. Though the movie clocks in almost two and a half hours, Scott keeps the momentum steady and avoids straying too far from the movie's pilgrimage to making a last stand. Scott even sends in a few platoons of thought regarding medieval tactics and war machines. And much more.

A rarity

Scott imbues every rock, blade, hoof, flag, blood drop and shield with a perfectionist's eye for detail and a historian's passion for verisimilitude. While the bar has been raised quick high by past battlefield epics (among them Scott's own "Gladiator" and the aforementioned LOTR), "Kingdom" takes the art house approach, relying on cinematographer John Matheison, designers Arthur Max and Janty Yates to make the carnage accurate, new and yet enthralling. Composer Harry Gregson-Williams sets the right balance between anthems and choirs to set up this medieval apocalypse.

The combination of Scott's handiwork, Bloom's swashbuckling and the intentional echoes of a conflict that has survived centuries to vex peacemakers to this day turns "Kingdom" into a rarity: a crowd-pleasing personal statement from an accomplished director. A cinematic juggernaut that can fight on many fronts, "Kingdom" will satisfy history buffs, please action movie enthusiasts, tickle Bloom fans and win over even those who don't like war flicks. In many ways a modern knight's impassioned and studied take on what makes for a perfect, medieval knight, "Kingdom of Heaven" is a welcome invasion, a thinking-man's actioner that does not fetishize or romanticize combat, but instead poeticizes it.

Twentieth Century Fox's "Kingdom of Heaven" opens nationwide on May 4.

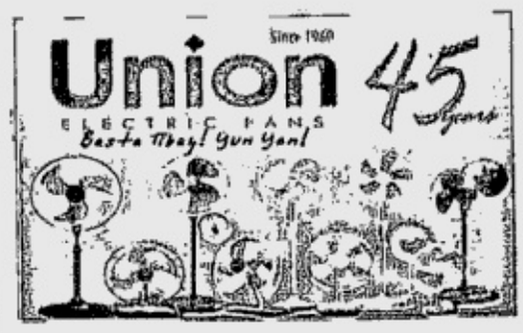
Isang taos-pusong pasasalamat, mga Kapusong Cebuano!

Bilang pasasalamat sa inyong mainit na pagtanggap at patuloy na pagsuporta, isang espesyal na weekend ang aming handog para sa inyo.

Saan mang sulok kayo sa Cebu, abangan ang mga GMA buses at jeeps para sa **libreng sakay** papuntang SM Cebu sa April 30 at Cebu City Sports Complex (formerly Abellana) sa May 1.

Kapuso, No.1 ta! GMA

Diri ta bai! GMA



Scott Speedman talks about Pinoy co-star

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—I espied **Scott Speedman**, Fil-Am actor **Ramon de Ocampo**'s co-star in the big action movie "xXx: The Next Level," walking into a hotel lobby from a midday walk in New York's Central Park the other weekend.

We ended up in the same elevator so I "warned" the actor with the smiling eyes that I would ask him about Ramon in a press con scheduled with him in half an hour.

My guess was that Scott was going back to his room to change from his street clothes into a *pang*-press con outfit. How wrong I was. Thirty minutes later, he strode in, in the same clothes. Ah, young Hollywood—times have indeed changed.

Scott has grown a beard since filming "The Next Level" as clean cut Agent Steele of the US National Security Agency (NSA). Ramon, who plays Steele's assistant, Agent Meadows, gets 11th billing in the movie's closing credits, after the likes of **Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson, Willem Dafoe** (who has told me he enjoyed filming "Platoon" and "Born on the Fourth of July" in the Philippines), Scott and **Peter Strauss** (I'll date myself but to this day, despite his other film and TV credits, I still remember him most from "Rich Man, Poor Man"). Not bad at all for Ramon, who has been in Hollywood for only over a year.

Scott was ready when I stood up to ask the first question. Of Ramon, he says, "I met him two days before we started shooting. He told me that this was his first movie role on a grand level like this, and it was mine as well. He's had a lot of experience in theater. So it was great to watch him get comfortable as we went along. We had a lot of fun together. He was really cool to work with. We got to be good friends, actually so it was nice."

Scott was an aspiring Olympian swimmer for Canada until a neck injury dashed his hopes. He laughed when I shared De Ocampo's anecdote about trying to catch up with him in their scenes where they run after some characters.

Ramon de Ocampo stumbled and fell in some of their running scenes but 'it was fun,' the H'wood actor says

"My mom is a world record holder runner," Scott explained. "I'm actually much more a natural runner than I am a swimmer. That's probably what I should have done if I really pursued athletics—more running stuff. So yes, I loved doing the running scenes in this movie. I didn't want my stand-in or my stunt double to do the running scenes for me. Ramon fell a couple of times while we were running, but it was pretty fun doing those scenes."

Scott added that he keeps in touch with Ramon. "We exchange text messages," he said as he mimed the act of texting with his fingers (yes, Manila, Hollywood is finally, if slowly, catching up with the texting craze). "I get a text message from Ramon now and then."

Another Fil-Am actor in LA

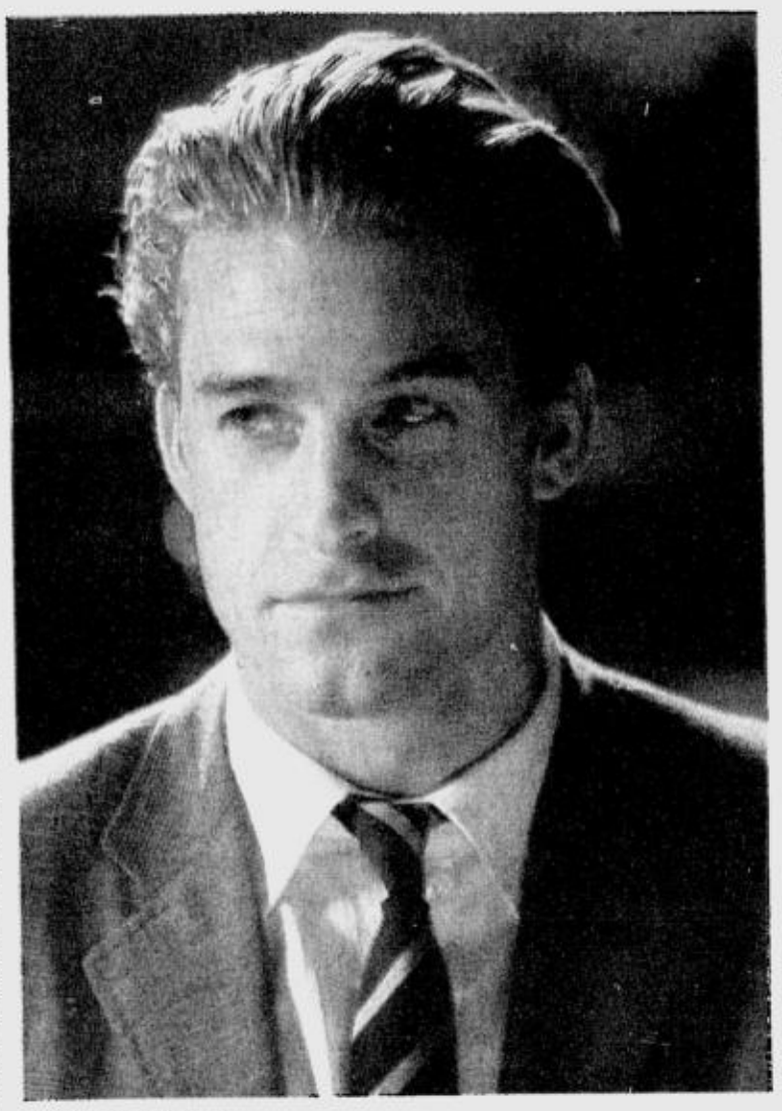
Back in LA, when I bumped into another Fil-Am actor, **Alec Mapa**, last week and told him that I interviewed his friend Ramon recently, this fun, witty, versatile performer (**Jao Mapa** is his nephew) quipped, "Did you have trouble getting him to talk about himself?"

After asking me how Ramon fared in the movie, a sequel to "xXx," with Ice Cube now in the title role played by **Vin Diesel**, Alec said, "I have known him (Ramon) since we worked together in 'Dogeaters' in 2000. He was the young Filipino actor that New York was buzzing about as the one to watch."

Alec himself continues to generate buzz. On the evening that we saw Alec, he received the Visionary Award from the East West Players, the preeminent Asian theater company in the US, at a big awards dinner at the Universal City Hilton.

A bit of a background on Alec:

RAMON de Ocampo



SCOTT Speedman

We've been rallying for this actor, playwright and stand-up comedian since we saw him in his hit monologue "I Remember Mapa" at the Fort Amphitheatre a few years ago. Some of his relatives from Manila were in the audience when we watched. A few months ago, when I asked **Toni Collette** about Alec, her co-star in "Connie and Carla" (a comedy now out on DVD that also starred **Nia Vardalos** of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"), little did we know that the Aussie actress was an even bigger fan.

In "Connie and Carla," Toni and Nia, who are trying to elude killers, pretend to be men in drag at an LA club where Alec plays one of the performers.

Toni, Australian Film Institute Award's best actress for "Muriel's Wedding" (she was also in "The Sixth Sense" and "About a Boy"), was breathless about Alec: "I think Alec is an acting genius and he's such a beautiful, vivacious young man. And so smart and hysterically funny. I am very fond of Alec."

Alec got his first big break when he took over **BD Wong** as Song Liling in the Tony Award-winning play, "M. Butterfly," on Broadway. You should hear his hilarious monologue in "I Remember Mapa" (we think this show will be a hit in Manila) in which he recalls how, as an understudy, he couldn't wait for BD to relinquish the role and how he tried to steal scenes as a supporting actor in the background.

ALEC Mapa and his father, Victorino

A gay rights activist, Alec was American TV's first gay Asian regular on the series "Some of My Best Friends." He is a cast regular on a current show, "Half & Half." The multi-awarded actor has appeared in several films, including a brief but memorable encounter with Dennis Quaid in "Playing by Heart," which also starred **Sean Connery, Gena Rowlands, Ryan Phillippe** and **Nastassja Kinski.**

In accepting East West's award, Alec recalled his acting career's slide when he was done with "M. Butterfly" and the acclaim and applause suddenly quieted down. "I could not get a job for years," he revealed. "The experience was so humiliating. So I said, that's it, I am going to be a travel agent. I was the worst travel agent. My clients ended up in Timbuktu when they wanted to go to Cancun."

The night's biggest honoree added, "I did what every good Filipino Catholic would do—I went to church. I prayed, please give me a sign if you want me to be an actor and the very next day, I was cast in a play at East West. My Filipino father said (here he imitated the accent of his father, Victorino, who was present), see what happens if you go to church."

Alec riffed about Pinoys' spendthrift ways at gala fundraising events like this one, in which the house lights went on in between numbers to facilitate the auction of items. "It was so funny when the lights went up," he remarked. "The Filipinos at my table said (again in his father's accent), whaaat, whaaat? We already paid for the table. They want more?"

The audience, a who's who in Asian-American entertainment, from **Nancy Kwan** to up-and-coming actors like Fil-Am **Anthony Begonia** (who plays a sumo wrestler in the eagerly anticipated film adaptation of "Memoirs of a Geisha") lapped up Alec's joke:

"What's the difference between a Filipino and a canoe? A canoe tips."

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales@yahoo.com.

One really big reason to feel nervous

JENNYLYN and Mark

By Marinel R. Cruz and Kathryn Fatima Reyes

YOUNG stars Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado have one big reason to feel nervous these days. Their launching movie, "Say That You Love Me," will be facing off with a Claudine Barretto-Jericho Rosales film in the week of June 1.

Mark and Jen consider themselves neophytes; Claudine and Jericho have proven their mettle in the box office.

"We're already feeling the pressure," said Jen.

"Say That You Love Me" is hot on the heels of their highly successful movie, "Let the Love Begin," which also featured Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin. They were first featured in Regal Films' "So Happy Together."

Mac Alejandre directs "Say That You Love Me" for GMA Films.

TAKE FIVE

With your tight schedule, do you still find time to go out?

M: We really make time for that. But we usually just hang out at Jen's house, watch DVD, use the computer, or just chat.

J: We also play with my dogs.

Do you think being a couple on and off-screen works?

M: I think it's advantageous, because this means you're already comfortable working together.

J: For example, if your roles require you to be sweet, *hindi na kayo naiilang.*

What happens when you fight and you need to be sweet on-screen?

M: We fight a lot. But if we're required to do something together, *nagagawa pa rin namin.*

J: Sometimes, because of work, *nagkakabati rin kami.*

If GMA 7 decides to team you up with others, how would you handle it?

J: It's just work. I wouldn't mind.

Do you plan to go back to school?

J: Of course. But right now, *hindi pa talaga kaya.* Instead of reviewing my modules, *itinutulog ko na lang.* Most of the time, I'm already too tired when I get home, *bagsak* na. I'd like to take up tourism in college.

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Persuading erring TV shows to really mend their ways

VIEWERS who hate the way that local show biz talk shows have polluted the television screen are heartened by reports that a leading advertising agency has decided to temporarily stop supporting those erring programs with commercials.

If the agency's move starts a trend, it'll send out a message that most TV people won't be able to ignore. "Free" television lives and thrives on the income it generates from advertising, so when that source of income dries up, that's a big deal—and persuasion strong enough for erring shows to really mend their ways.

All too often, however, remedial measures aren't sweeping enough, or lose steam and resolve after some months. So, reformists have their work cut out for them to convince TV people to really clean up their act—on a permanent basis.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Local noontime shows are a good example of this. When criticism against their excesses reach fever pitch, skimpy costumes are augmented, "naughty" hosts stop fooling around, female guests aren't treated like sex objects—but only until the critics start looking the other way.

Then, all of the shows' excessive and irresponsible element return—with a vengeance—until the criticism starts mounting again, and the cynical *rigodon* plays itself out all over again.

What will it take to convince erring TV people that their wild and wooly days of irresponsible fun and games are permanently over? Simply put, people who want to clean up the TV screen have to see the task as an unending effort—and never, ever, let down their guard.

'Smallville'

SEASON Four of "Smallville" on Studio 23 began telecasting last Tuesday at 9:10 p.m., with its episode titled "Crusade." In the season opener, Lois Lane, the Man of Steel's once and future love, made her long-awaited debut.

She did so in a most unexpected manner—nearly running over a naked, amnesiac Clark Kent (Tom Welling) in the middle of a Kansas cornfield. Lois Lane is played in the series by Erica Durance.

'Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin'

ABS-CBN's new *teleserye* stars **Claudine Barretto, John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo, Diether Ocampo, Angelica dela Cruz** and **Shaina Magdayao**. The romantic drama is co-directed by **Eric Reyes** and **Jerome Pobocan**.

Major roles will also be played by acclaimed actors **Hilda Koronel, Tirso Cruz III, Jaclyn Jose, Noni Buencamino** and **Carmi Martin**. Other regulars are **Kathleen Hermosa, Vanna Garcia, Marla Boyd** and **Glaiza de Castro**. **Raphael Martinez, Kiko Matos** and **DM Sevilla** are cast as Shaina's suitors.

Feedback

FROM **Elgin Arambulo** of Pasay City: "Reformists who want to clean up the broadcast media shouldn't limit themselves to TV. Radio has its share of excesses, including scandalous gossip, unfounded rumors, some self-styled commentators' rash and biased opinions, songs with lewd lyrics, etc. Attention, please."

ShowReal Asia 2 Awards

ASIAN documentary filmmakers will gather in Singapore for the National Geographic Channel ShowReal Asia 2 Awards and public screening of its new season on April 29 at the Fort Canning Green.

Awards will be presented for these categories: Best Film, Director, Cinematography, Editing and Most Innovative Documentary.

ShowReal Asia is a collaboration between NGC and Singapore's Economic Development Board. The partnership's first season of programs in 2003 received numerous international accolades, including the 2004 Asian Television Awards' Best Documentary trophy.

Other honors were garnered at the Australian Cinematographer's Society Awards, New York Festival and Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival.

Among the works to be screened on April 29 include excerpts from the wild world of Japanese Shock Boys, Thai snake fighting, the world's busiest fort, and a witch-hunt in India.

These award-winning documentaries will be aired on NGC every Wednesday from May 4 to 13.

Rachelle Ann Go

SINGING champion **Rachelle Ann Go**'s first big solo show, "The Ultimate Champion," will be staged tonight at the Aliw Theater in Pasay City. Call 9115555.

Now available is a special concert edition of Rachelle Ann's album, "Don't Cry Out Loud." It contains the "Rachelle Ann Go" CD, a bonus VCD with the music videos of her singles ("Through the Rain," "Don't Cry Out Loud," "Love of my Life," and "You and Me") and a dance remix of "Don't Cry Out Loud" and "We Are One People."

'Love You, Hate You...'

THE LAST performance of "Love You, Hate You, Love You" will be staged tonight at Merk's, Greenbelt 3. The intimate musical revue about love in all its dizzying manifestations and contradictions topbills the unbeatable musical-theater, concert and club performing tandem of **Isay Alvarez** and **Robert Seña**. Call 7574720.

Viewing treats on AXN

THIS Friday at 8:30 p.m. on the AXN channel, the new entertainment news and features show, "E Buzz," regales viewers with the latest developments in the exciting world of show business.

And at 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, don't miss the film "Crazy in Alabama," starring **Melanie Griffith**, and directed by her husband, **Antonio Banderas**.

Yes, the Latin hunk is putting on his directorial hat for this venture, a pet project that he's been planning to do for years now.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, April 28 at 12:50 p.m., "Changing Lanes." 4 p.m., "She's Having a Baby." 9 p.m., "Mystic River." April 29 at 6 p.m., "The Secret Life of Zooey."

On Cinemax, April 28 at 6:30 a.m., "S1m One." 9 p.m., "Poodle Springs." April 29 at 6:50 p.m., "A League of their Own."

Kuh Ledesma at the Movies

ALL Fridays and Saturdays of May at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, **Kuh Ledesma** marks her 25th year in the music business with a special show, "The Songs That Made the Movies." Call 7210635.

In the intimate but exciting concert, Kuh reprises some of the most beautiful and memorable movie theme songs. She will be joined by **Jake Macapagal, Lana Jalosjos, Sheila Valderama**, with **Rey Cristobal** as musical director. Inspired direction is by **Leo Rialp**.

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SM Cinema Megamall 2:30 pm
SM Cinema Manila 3:30 pm

GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium cinema
1. xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
11:05 FS / 11:35 MF / 1:40 / 3:45 / 5:50 7:55 / 9:35 LFS / 10:00 LMF / 11:40 END
2. THE INTERPRETER
11:15 FS / 11:45 MF / 2:15 / 4:45 7:15 / 9:25 LFS / 9:50 LMF / 12:00 END
633-8978

sm megamall cinema 1
GUESS WHO
12:10 FS / 12:40 MF / 2:55 / 5:10 7:25 / 9:10 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 11:25 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: BE COOL
12:00 FS / 12:30 MF / 2:30 / 4:54 / 7:12 9:12 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:30 END
CINEMA 3: xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
11:30 MF / 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 9:10 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:10 END
(032) 231-3876

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 FINDING NEVERLAND
2 SAHARA
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 THE JACKET
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 SAMARA: RING 2
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 THE INTERPRETER
11 GUESS WHO
12 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city fairview
1 GUESS WHO
2 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 THE JACKET
6 SAHARA
7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
8 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
9 SAMARA: RING 2
10 FINDING NEVERLAND
11 THE PACIFIER
12 OK KA PARE KO

sm city north edsa
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 GUESS WHO
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila
1 GUESS WHO
2 THE INTERPRETER
3 FINDING NEVERLAND
4 SAHARA
5 THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 OK KA PARE KO
8 SAMARA: RING 2
9 RING OF THE NIBELUNG
10 THE PACIFIER
11 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
12 THE JACKET

sm city sta. mesa
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 CAN THIS BE LOVED
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 THE INTERPRETER
8 SAHARA
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 GUESS WHO

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 THE JACKET
8 SAMARA: RING 2
9 SAHARA
10 GUESS WHO

sm city bicutan
1 SAHARA
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 GUESS WHO
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 GUESS WHO
2 SAMARA: RING 2
3 SAHARA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 BE COOL
4 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 THE PACIFIER

sm city baguio
1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 CURSED
3 THE PACIFIER
4 CLOSER

sm city batangas
1 BE COOL
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
4 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD

sm city dasmariñas
1 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 SAMARA: RING 2
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

sm city marilao
1 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city bacoor
1 THE WEDDING DATE
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
4 SAMARA: RING 2
5 SAHARA
6 GUESS WHO
7 THE PACIFIER
8 OK KA PARE KO

sm city lucena
1 CURSED
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 CLOSER
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 RESERVED
3 THE PACIFIER
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
5 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
6 SAMARA: RING 2
7 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
8 SAHARA

sm city iloilo
1 SHAOLIN v.s EVIL DEAD
2 RESERVED
3 BE COOL
4 THE PACIFIER
5 BOOGEYMAN
6 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
7 RESERVED
8 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city davao
1 THE PACIFIER
2 SAHARA
3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
4 HOSTAGE
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 HIDE AND SEEK

sm city cagayan de oro
1 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
2 THE PACIFIER
3 BE COOL
4 SAMARA: RING 2

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1 XXX 2
MTRCB: PG-13
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

2 THE INTERPRETER
MTRCB: PG-13
10:50, 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10

3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
MTRCB: GP P120.00
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

4 GUESS WHO
MTRCB: PG-13
11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50

PREMIERE THEATRE THE JACKET
MTRCB. PG-13 1.00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
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11:40, 2:25, 5:00, 7:35, 10:10
PG13
CINEMA 2
TRIPLE X 2
10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10
PG13
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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 THE INTERPRETER
12:05, 2:55, 5:45 8:35, 11:10
PG-13
2 XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
10:55, 1:20, 3:45 6:10, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13
3 GUESS WHO?
12:35, 3:10, 5:45 8:20, 10:50
PG-13
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
1:05, 3:35, 6:05 8:35, 11:00
GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

GUESS WHO PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:15	XXX 2:THE NEXT LEVEL PG13 1:10,3:20,5:30,7:40,9:50	THE INTERPRETER PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45,10:30
CANTHIS BE LOVE GP 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00	WEDDING DATE PG13 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	XXX 2:THE NEXT LEVEL PG13 1:40,3:50,6.00,8:10,10:20

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

starmall EDSA SHAW
Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Paraiso
4 Can This Be Love
5 XXX 2
Kids Salon and Fashion Show
Starmall Edsa Apr 30 Saturday
2nd Level Food Court, 4pm

METROPOLIS ALABANG
Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Ring of Nibelungs
2 Paraiso
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 XXX 2
6 Can This Be Love

starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. No. 874.43.99
1 Sahara
2 Rental Reservation
Star Model Search (Screening) at Metropolis Alabang April 29-30 2pm

Levi's Day in Davao, Baguio, Cebu and Manila

IT'S Levi's 501 Day tomorrow in four locations. Davao marks it with homegrown bands **Loo'Sid, Scandollz, Mayo** and **Four Sided Circles**, and the **Mongols** from Manila. Cebu's celebration features hot local bands **Uk Lilly, Squall, Pandora JR Kilat**, and **Cattski**. Baguio features **Stonefree, Reggae Mistress, Imago** and **Sandwich**. Manila's Eastwood event topbills **Hale, 6 Cycle Mind, Brownman Revival, Urbandub** and **Sugarfree**, plus up and coming groups **7 Foot Jr, Menaya, Kiko Machine, Blue Ketchup, Milk N Money**, and **Narda**.

SHOW TIME

SANDWICH

BOYZ II Men

'Boyz II Men: Live In Manila!' tonight

The hit-making group **Boyz II Men** is back in the country and will perform tonight at PSC-Ultra. "Boyz II Men II: Live in Manila" also features fast-rising singer Faith.

Included in the repertoire are the Boyz's biggest hits: "On Bended Knees," "I'll Make Love to You," "Water Runs Dry," "It's so Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday," "One Sweet Day (a duet with Mariah Carey)," "4 Seasons of Loneliness" and "End of the Road."

"Boyz II Men: Live In Manila" is produced by Spooky Productions. Executive producers for the concert are Jesse Samala, Leo Wasan and Ken Hahn. Official media partner is ABS-CBN. Call 8919999. Limited VIP tickets entitle patrons to a free copy of a Boyz II Men CD, which they can have autographed in a meet-and-greet interaction with the band at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel right after the concert.

Tonight

Rachelle Ann Go in concert at **Aliw Theater** with **Mark Bautista, Christian Bautista, Jay-R** and **Ogie Alcasid** as special guests; 8 p.m. Call 9115555.

Lito Camo takes center stage in "Lagi na Lang Kayo... Ako Naman!" at the **Music Museum**, 8:30 p.m. Call 8919999.

KUH Ledesma

Kuh Ledesma in "The Songs That Made the Movies" at the **Captain's Bar** of the Mandarin Oriental, 9 p.m.

Bedazzled II at **Club Mwah!** every Friday and Saturday, 10:30 p.m. Call 5357943.

Rockin' Revival at **Funnside**, Timog Ave., Q.C.

Lucid Band at **Taste Buds** Robinsons Place Manila, 7 p.m.

Acoustic Jive at **Merk's**.

Fat Session at the **Tavern on the Square** in Greenbelt 2 Makati.

Tomorrow

Monique Wilson celebrates 25 years in theater with an anniversary concert at the **Music Museum**. Call 8966695.

Mossimo Bikini Summit with **Kitchie Nadal, Grace Nono, Ella May Saison, Pido, Jimmy Bondoc, Rachelle Ann Go** and **Frenchie Dy** at the **Araneta Coliseum**. Call 9115555.

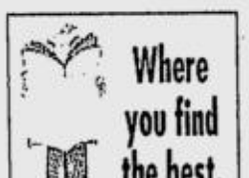
Kuh Ledesma in "The Songs That Made the Movies" at the **Captain's Bar** of the Mandarin Oriental, 9 p.m.

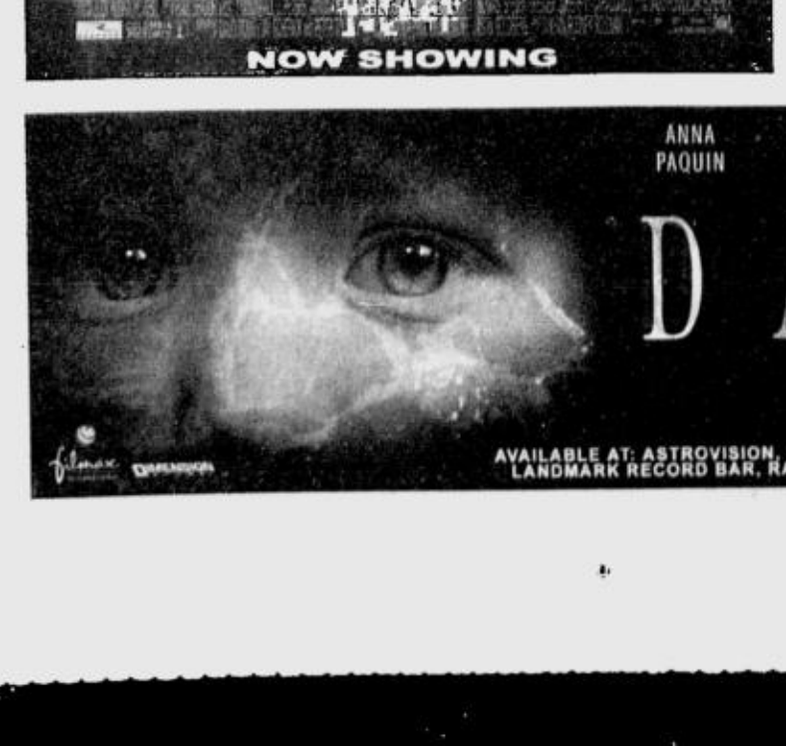
Southborder and **Silk** in the concert and fashion show, "Heat Wave" at the **Krua Thai Parking Lot**, Macapagal Ave. corner Edsa Extension, Pasay City; 7:30 p.m.

Kyla at the **Quezon Convention Center** in Lucena, Quezon

"**Spettacolo Pirotecnico**," light and fireworks show at **Enchanted Kingdom**, 9 p.m.

Christine Barangan and **Gil Claridades** at the Grand Matador and GSM Blue Party, **Sulo Hotel**, Diliman, Quezon City. Call 9245051





Stunning comeback for Mariah

COCO Lee

NEW YORK—Pop diva Mariah Carey, whose career had appeared in permanent decline in recent years, staged a stunning comeback last week when her new album debuted at number one across the United States.

"The Emancipation of Mimi" sold 404,000 copies, besting Carey's previous first-week opening sales record of 323,000 copies for 1999's "Rainbow" and ending the six-week, chart-topping reign of rapper 50 Cent's "The Massacre."

SPIN CITY Advertised as "the return of the voice," the album's success looks set to revive a career that once seemed invincible before a series of professional and personal disasters sent it onto a free fall.

"Emancipation" is the first collection of original songs Carey has delivered since 2002's tepidly received "Charmbracelet." And it is packed with her trademark power ballads and collaborations with hip-hop heavyweights such as Nelly, Snoop Dogg and Kanye West.

The album was released on the Island Def Jam label, owned by Universal. *AFP*

CELINE Dion

Coco Lee 'Exposed'

Asian superstar Coco Lee returns with her second full-length English album, "Exposed," under Sony BMG Asia. With every purchase of the CD comes a free sachet of St. Ives Invigorating Apricot Scrub or Collagen Elasting Bodywash-and-Lotion-in-One. The promo is available at selected Odyssey, Tower Records, Music One, Astroplus, Astrovision and Radio City outlets until May 9.

Raining on Luke

It seems prophetic that Luke Mejares' latest single and video are entitled "Ulan." Of late, there's been a steady shower of blessings in his life.

An original composition by Arnie Mendaraos, "Ulan" is included in Luke's "Stop, Luke and Listen" album under BMG Records Pilipinas. He is preparing to cut a second album, for which he also plans to write more original songs.

For Mother's Day

Celine Dion and photographer Anne Geddes have collaborated on the "Miracle" project, a collection of inspiring songs that honor the bond between mother and child. The album is available on CDs, cassettes and limited-edtion DVD pack with a 42-page mini booklet.

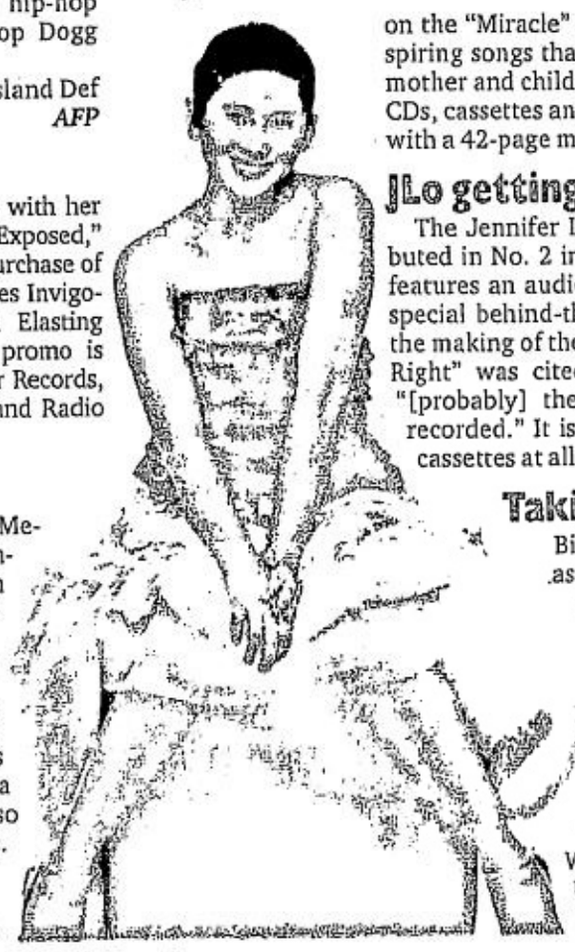
JLo getting it right

The Jennifer Lopez album "Rebirth" debuted in No. 2 in US charts. The collection features an audio CD and DVD featuring a special behind-the-scenes documentary on the making of the album. The hot track "Get Right" was cited by People magazine as "[probably] the coolest thing she's ever recorded." It is now available in CDs and cassettes at all record bars nationwide.

Taking it higher

Bianca and Ryan, also known as Ascension, recently released their self-titled album under Alpha Music Corp.'s Harmony Music label. The collection consists of nine original songs and one revival. Songs include the laid-back "Take Some Time," "Let You Go" and "Like the Way"; the hip-hop "Turn It Up" and acoustic "Wait for Me" and "Unchoose." Now available in high-grade cassette and CD.

JENNIFER Lopez



SARAH Geronimo

'Can This Be Love?'

Sarah Geronimo's version of "Can This Be Love?" is the theme song of Star Cinema's movie of the same title, starring Hero Angeles and Sandara Park. The song was composed by Ryan Cayabyab and originally popularized by Smokey Mountain. Sarah's rendition, which features musical arrangement by Mon Faustino, became a certified hit in less than a month after its release. Viva recently released Sarah's new CD Lite featuring acoustic and minus-one versions of "Can This Be Love?" plus the music videos of "Lumingon Ka Lang" and "How Could You Say You Love Me." All for P199 at record bars nationwide.

Mega composer

Sharon "Megastar" Cuneta sings her own composition, "Now That You're gone" in a new collection of her pop recordings released by Viva Records. Arranged by Homer Flores and produced by Snaffu Rigor, the song marked Sharon's debut as a songwriter. Also titled "Now That You're Gone," the album includes her other work, "Maybe Someday," produced by Rigor and arranged by Mel Villena.

ASCENSION

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

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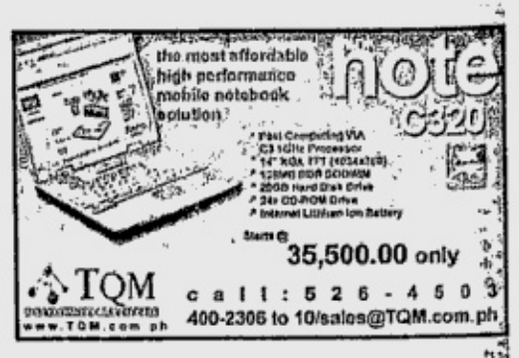
Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma



CAP bucks receiver, says suit a 'nuisance'

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

EMBATTLED pre-need firm College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) yesterday warned that putting it in government's hands or placing it under a receivership would impact adversely on its operations, saying no company placed under state stewardship was able to recover.

A group of lawyers led by former Philippine Stock Exchange surveillance chief Maricel Pascual-Lopez and former Securities and Exchange Commission director Tomas Syquia filed a class suit against CAP on Wednesday, asking the Makati Regional Trial Court to appoint a receiver to immediately take over the management and control of CAP.

"Maybe people do not realize the net effect of receivership. Tell me of any corporation placed under receivership or placed under the regulator that has made money or recovered. Tell us of any company managed by government that has made money," CAP first vice-president Bobby Café yesterday said.

He also said that appointing a receiver would block efforts by its property investor Greencircle and Greensquare Property to infuse P6 billion worth of property assets into CAP's trust fund.

"How can (the government) manage a pre-need company when they don't have any experience," said Jose Montoya, CAP first executive vice-president.

Café said the company's lawyers were studying legal options to counter the class suit, which alleged fraud in CAP's investments in various firms related to the Sobrepeña family.

"We are not worried, we think this is a nuisance suit. There may be hidden hands behind this but we are in no possession of any evidence on this," Café said.

"It may be a little misplaced. They are talking about syndicated estafa. We cannot think of any reason why there may be estafa," he added.

Café also said that CAP would not seek a suspension of payments from local courts as what beleaguered pre-need firm Pacific Plans Inc. did.

"We are not running away from the problem. We are paying our obligations and we will continue to pay plans in the future," Café said.

CAP said its department on the sixth floor of its main office along Amorsolo Street in Makati was open for plan holders who wished to pre-terminate their plans.

Café clarified that although there was a shareholder proposal to conduct a buyback program for existing plans, this option has not been acted upon by CAP's board.

"Our president said this would defeat the purpose of the education plan. The objective is to send the student to college," Café said.

CAP also said it continued to be in negotiations with Zurich-based International Global Capital Holdings AG to infuse $12.5 million into CAP in exchange for preferred shares. IGCH may also acquire one board seat.

The infusion, equivalent to about P675 million, will address part of the first semester's P1.2 billion tuition requirements.

CAP's trustee bank has written the SEC on Wednesday to seek approval of its equity deal with IGCH.

The second semester's requirement of P1.2 billion will be covered by the possible sale of CAP assets, which may include its 1,000-hectare property in Sucat and shares of stock.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

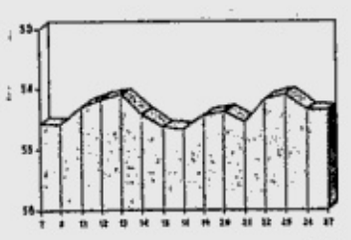
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱54.40 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 28, 2005

¥105.87 = $1

As of 5 p.m., April 28, 2005



GOLD: $432.00-432.50

per ounce Hong Kong, April 28, 2005

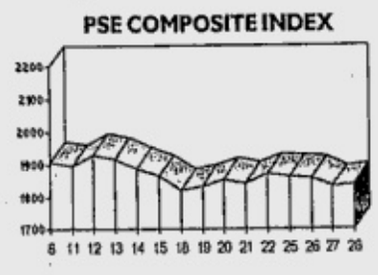
STOCK MARKET

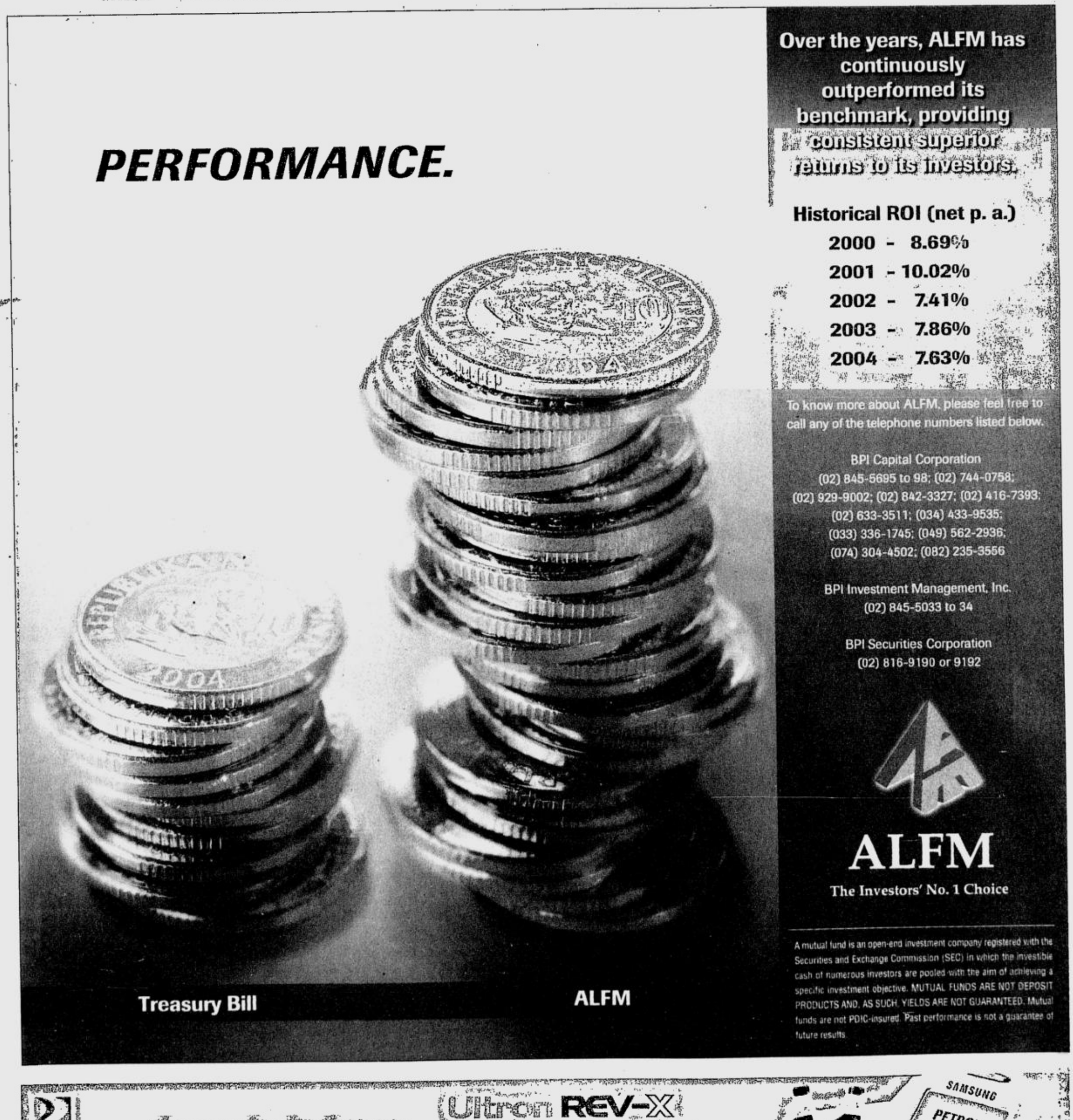
Shares close 0.43% higher

SHARE prices closed 0.43 percent higher yesterday, staging a modest technical bounce after heavy losses Wednesday as investors picked up bargains in light trade, dealers said.

SHARES/ B3

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX





BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DBP, RCBC extend ₱3-B loan for North Triangle project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY giant Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) has reached an agreement with the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) on a P3-billion loan to jumpstart its P5-billion mall project at the North Triangle in Edsa.

Industry sources said the five-year loan secured by ALI affiliate North Triangle Depot Commercial Corp. (NTDCC) would be equally shared by DBP and RCBC at P1.5 billion each.

The sources said the remaining P2 billion might be funded through equity infusion from the firm's shareholders.

Construction of the 200,000-square meter North Triangle mall linked to the MRT North Edsa station will start as soon as funding has been secured and will be completed by 2007.

ALI owns 49 percent of NTDCC with the balance held by Anglo-Phil Holdings Corp. (15.8 percent), Ramcar Inc. (13.4 percent), Sheridan Holdings Inc. (13.6 percent), DBH Inc. (4.08 percent) and Allante Realty and Development Corp. (4.08 percent).

The North Triangle mall will serve as the anchor development of the MRT Consortium's 16-hectare depot in Quezon City.

The mall will be a four-story retail center with a gross leasable area of approximately 162,000 square meters. Of this, 90,000 square meters will be the mall proper. The balance of 72,000 sq m will constitute two anchor buildings to be funded and built by third-party developers.

The property is located in front of the SM City mall of retail tycoon Henry Sy.

It will be ALI's first mall venture in Quezon City.

For the period January to March this year, ALI reported that its net income soared 134 percent to P1.2 billion from P496 million in the same period last year.

The previous year's net income of P536 million had been restated as a result of the adoption of new accounting standards that became effective January this year. Adjustments based on new standards lowered the 2004 first-quarter net income by P40 million.

Revenues in the first quarter of 2005 increased 88 percent to P6.9 billion due mainly to the sale of ALI's interest in redeemable preferred shares of Astoria Investment Ventures Inc. (AIVI).

AIVI is the company that held a 16-percent interest in the LRT-3 project.

The 2005 first-quarter net income included the net gain from the AIVI deal worth P2.2 billion.

Income, however, was offset by provisions for the decline in the value of certain assets and the write-off of deferred charges worth P1.6 billion.

Also contributing to the revenue growth were the strong results reported by ALI's three core operating business lines, namely leasing, development and services.

Bayantel posts 8% growth in '04 revenues

By Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-OWNED Bayan Telecommunications Inc. registered an 8-percent growth in revenues to P5.46 billion in 2004, fueled mainly by the "customer-centric" initiatives that it put in place last year.

"Bayantel's remarkable performance in 2004 is a culmination of gains and learnings from adopting a customer-focused strategy. The company executed various initiatives such as creating its own customer care group and investing heavily in research and related activities to better understand the customers," the company said in a statement yesterday.

While remaining at a net loss position, the telecom firm posted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) of P2.23 billion, 58 percent higher than the P1.43 billion in 2003.

However, company officials declined to give the exact net loss figure, saying Bayantel was more concerned now about Ebitda, a good indicator of cash flow, considering that all its capital expenditures and operating expenses were funded by internally generated cash.

For the first quarter of the year, Bayantel racked up net revenues of P1.4 billion, growing 7 percent from the P1.3 billion posted in the same period last year.

Operating income was placed at P80 million.

Following the 2004 trend, Ebitda continued to be strong, increasing 15 percent to P592 million in the January-March period from P514 million in the same period a year before.

Growth drivers for the first quarter were the company's traditional fixed line service and its always-on, high-speed digital subscriber line (DSL) Internet offering.

Despite "buffet" promotions by dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Bayantel's landline subscriber base still grew 9 percent in the first quarter.

Bayantel vice president for Metro Manila retail Ray Montinola said the churn rate, or the number of service disconnections over a given period, was hardly affected.

"We looked at how (PLDT's P10 flat rate promo) will affect us. Is it leading to greater churn? Not exactly, as our actual churn rate was even below our targeted churn rate. As for new subscriber acquisitions, we've also met our targets," he said in a briefing yesterday.

As of end-2004, BayanTel had about 300,000 subscribers.

For its DSL service, revenues doubled to P62 million in the first quarter from P31 million in the same period last year, due mainly to strong subscriber take-up.

DSL lines in service increased 133 percent in the first quarter. Net additional subscribers would also likely be on the growth path in the coming months, particularly with the boom of the online gaming industry in the country.

Grepalife, Malayan: No exposure in PPI

GREAT Pacific Life Assurance Corp. and Malayan Insurance yesterday said that they have no exposure in Pacific Plans Inc.

The two companies issued the clarification yesterday in reaction to a statement from the Insurance Commission that it would look into insurance companies associated with pre-need firms.

Grepalife and Malayan said they operate independently and adhere to the strict rules of the Insurance Commission on the use of their funds.

The other day, Pacific Plans president Ernesto Garcia also said the Yuchengco group would help PPI in every way without compromising the integrity of the other companies in the conglomerate.

He said these other companies have different stakeholders whose interests would be protected in all forms at all times while PPI undergoes rehabilitation.

The Yuchengcos are talking to financial institutions to put up a liquidity window that would buy the fixed-value plans PPI would issue to plan holders under its proposed money-back-plus offer.

The window will allow plan holders to encash these plans even before their 2010 maturity. The proposal is part of the rehabilitation plan PPI has filed with a Makati court.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 28, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	25.5	26	25.5	25.5	22,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47.5	48	47	48	431,500
China Banking Corp.	660	660	660	660	960
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63	270,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46	47	45.5	47	120,200
International Exch. Bank	18	18	17.75	17.75	150,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	30	31.5	458,500
Philippine National Bank	30	30	30	30	77,300
Phil. Savings Bank	32.5	34	32.5	34	4,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,500
Security Bank Corp.	26	26	26	26	188,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	26	26	3,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	10,000
First Abacus Financial	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	30,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.99	1.02	459,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1600	1600	1600	1600	550
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14	14	13.75	13.75	8,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1	1	0.98	1	1,963,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	815	815	810	810	43,380
Ipeople Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.9	3.9	58,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	1,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3	3	2.9	3	1,717,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1380	1395	1380	1390	137,510
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	60,000
Philweb Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	21,100,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	16	15.5	16	25,600
Manila Electric Co. B	21.5	22.25	21.5	22	252,900
Manila Water Co. Inc.	5.9	6	5.8	5.9	2,127,000
Petron Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.25	732,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.12	550,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	15,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	579,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	120,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.02	1.02	1	1	32,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.52	0.52	1,900,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	3,086,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	5,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	101,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	54,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	46,400
Pancake House Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57	58	65,200
San Miguel Corp. B	82.5	83	82	83	84,900
Universal Robina Corp.	12	12.25	12	12.25	41,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	550,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Alak-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	8	8	8	8	3,000
Ayala Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.7	1,930,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.36	0.36	900,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.35	4.4	4.2	4.25	810,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.036	0.036	0.026	0.03	38,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.9	1.94	1.9	1.9	1,031,000
APC Group Inc.	0.205	0.31	0.205	0.3	950,000
Atcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	126,000,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	30,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13	13	10	10	40,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.155	2,800,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.94	0.91	0.93	12,480,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	300,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.225	0.2	0.225	1,850,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.27	130,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.55	2.44	2.5	10,070,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	60,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.2	8.2	7.8	7.9	443,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	42.5	42.5	42	42	94,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.08	0.08	5,700,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1,246,000
Jonics Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	20,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	21	21	21	21	2,500
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	1,556,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.34	125,930,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	50,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	246	250	246	250	1,258,480
South China Resources Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	20,000
Univide Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.19	0.205	7,460,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2	2	2	2	5,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	380,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	20,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	3,807,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.87	0.87	0.85	0.87	260,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.44	1.46	1,219,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	721,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,160,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	1,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.5	53,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.3	7.6	1,914,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	30,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.36	180,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.86	3,000,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.24	0.24	7,320,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	150,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.35	0.37	10,840,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	2,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.35	1.4	1.36	1.38	3,177,000
Golesco Land Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	40,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.58	0.58	720,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	200,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	257,000
SM Development Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.56	231,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	1,898,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc.B	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.8	70,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	65,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.75	4.75	4.7	4.7	45,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	8.8	8.8	36,000
Benguet Corp. B	29	29	29	29	300
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3	3	3	3	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	1,180,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	4,530,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	27,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	260,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.007	64,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	40,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	461,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	33	34	33	33	125,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.25	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	60,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	45,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	48,000
Shophil Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.14	0.145	12,710,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	800,000

CURRENCIES

April 28, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.773156	1.000000	54.4930
Japan	Yen	0.007306	0.009450	0.5150
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473403	1.905700	103.8473
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099146	0.128235	6.9879
Switzerland	Franc	0.648403	0.838645	45.7003
Canada	Dollar	0.619020	0.800641	43.6293
Singapore	Dollar	0.469690	0.607497	33.1043
Australia	Dollar	0.600743	0.777001	42.3411
Bahrain	Dinar	2.050866	2.652590	144.5476
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.206170	0.266660	14.5311
Brunei	Dollar	0.468267	0.605657	33.0041
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000081	0.000105	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019559	0.025297	1.3785
UAE	Dirham	0.210509	0.272272	14.8369
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.293400	70.4812
Argentina	Peso	0.266835	0.345125	18.8069
Brazil	Real	0.307663	0.397931	21.6845
Denmark	Kroner	0.134292	0.173693	9.4651
India	Rupee	0.017701	0.022894	1.2476
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.203489	0.263193	14.3422
Mexico	New Peso	0.069712	0.090165	4.9134
New Zealand	Dollar	0.556427	0.719683	39.2177
Norway	Kroner	0.122965	0.159043	8.6667
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013008	0.016824	0.9168
South Africa	Rand	0.127582	0.165014	8.9921
Korea	Won	0.000772	0.000999	0.0544
Sweden	Kroner	0.109379	0.141471	7.7092
Syria	Pound	0.014894	0.019264	1.0498
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024628	0.031854	1.7358
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000360	0.000466	0.0254

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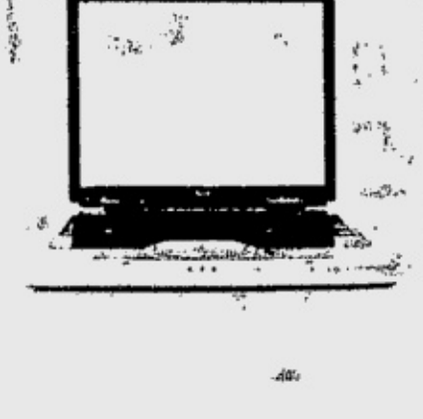

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AY to pacify plan holders

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

REELING from a public backlash that not only threatens his financial empire but also his legacy and his health, the 82-year-old taipan Alfonso Yuchengco has agreed to step in and provide funds to beleaguered Pacific Plan holders.

The broad outlines of the Yuchengco package, according to the pro-Yuchengco grapevine, would allow the 34,000 pre-need plan holders to cash in any time the 2010-maturity debt papers that Pacific Plans proposes to issue the plan holders.

And to plan holders who refuse to accept the Pacific Plans discounted debt papers, their college recipients would be allowed to enroll at the Yuchengco-owned Mapua Institute of Technology in any course of their choice at no cost.

The turnabout came after lengthy and continuous discussions by the taipan with his key advisers, amid the continuous text and rumor brigade directed against the Yuchengco group of companies. The mutinous plan holders have even established a website, www.pacificnoplans.blogspot.com, not only to express their views but also to coordinate their protest actions.

If the pro-Yuchengco grapevine is to be believed, the political opposition, through an Erap lawyer working behind the scenes, has even latched on to the anti-Pacific Plans movement to even up score against the taipan for his having funded Edsa 1 and especially Edsa 2 groups.

Within the Yuchengco circle, what remains to be agreed upon is the level of interest earnings that would be extended to Pacific plan holders who would vote along the rehabilitation proposal now pending before Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Romeo Barza.

But apparently the emerging consensus is that the swap papers would no longer be discounted, but also afforded higher interest rates than the 7 percent being proposed by the "new owners" of Pacific Plans.

One legal downside to the Yuchengco lifeline is that it would remove the legal fig leaf that Pacific Plans had already been devolved from the AY Group since August, which could presumably open the taipan's family to potential court actions.

Should the liquidity proposal go through, the AY Group would be hit by at least P500 million, representing the projected shortfall between the combined maturity values of the 34,000 maturing education plans and the underlying asset, National Power Corp. dollar-denominated bonds that will mature in 2010.

In all, the AY Group would have pumped in and lost about P2 billion should the so-called open-ended educational plans be allowed to mature and run their original course.

The boardroom stresses, meanwhile, have already taken a toll on former GMA adviser Gloria Tan Climaco, whose resignation as director of the Yuchengco's House of Investments was announced yesterday.

A former SGV chair like RCBC CEO Rizalino Navarro, Tan Climaco was said to have accepted a number of consultancy engagements that require frequent travel overseas.

Money-go-round

- THE SHUTTERED SM ACA auto and parts dealership on Vito Cruz will be converted into an SM Supercenter with a supermarket as an anchor.
- PETRON is adding a Jollibee outlet in its busy Gil Puyat (Buendia) and Makati avenues station. The oil company is now relying more and more on its property developments to help boost station earnings amid the government's continued leaning on pump prices.
- LANDLORD/LAWYER Romeo Roxas was first hired as a counsel of the College Assurance Plan Group, before CAP started calling him a "white knight," according to CAP board documents now disclosed in the class-action suit filed against the ailing pre-need company.

Heard through the grapevine

JARDINE Land has started foreclosure proceedings on the one-hectare Edsa campus of the Philippine Women's University over PWU's default on a P210-million facility extended by the property group way back in 1996.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

RP, Brunei sign port tariff deal

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENTS of the Philippines and Brunei Darussalam renewed last Wednesday an agreement mandating uniform port tariffs for some of the two countries' vessels, with the rate pegged at 50 percent less than the usual charge.

In simple signing ceremonies, the bilateral agreement, covered by the Bimp-Eaga (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines-East Asean Growth Area) Program, was renewed for another two years or until April 27, 2007.

Vessels operating under the Bimp-Eaga Program enjoy uniform tariffs, provided that bilateral agreements between the countries involved were still in effect.

In the Philippines, Bimp-Eaga Program tariffs were half that of the existing Philippine port tariffs for foreign vessels. Under the program, port dues are placed at 4 US cents per gross registered tonnage (GRT), while dockage fees are pegged at 2 US cents per GRT.

The first agreement between the Philippines and Brunei was signed on Sept. 1, 1999, and lasted until Aug. 31, 2001. The agreement signed last Wednesday was only the first extension of the original pact.

The country also had a similar agreement with Indonesia, the second extension of which was signed only last Jan. 16, 2004 and would last up to Jan. 15, 2006.

The original agreement with Indonesia was signed on Oct. 1, 1997, and had a validity of two years. The first extension took effect immediately after the original contract lapsed, covering the period from Oct. 1, 1999 to Sept. 30, 2001.

Shares close 0.43% higher

From page B1

The breadth remained negative—losers led gainers—reflecting cautiousness due to the delay in passage of a new value-added tax (VAT) bill that would help plug the government's chronic budget deficits.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 7.84 points to 1,838.16, the day's high, off a low of 1,818.56. Turnover was thin at 959 million shares worth P831.5 million. *AFP*

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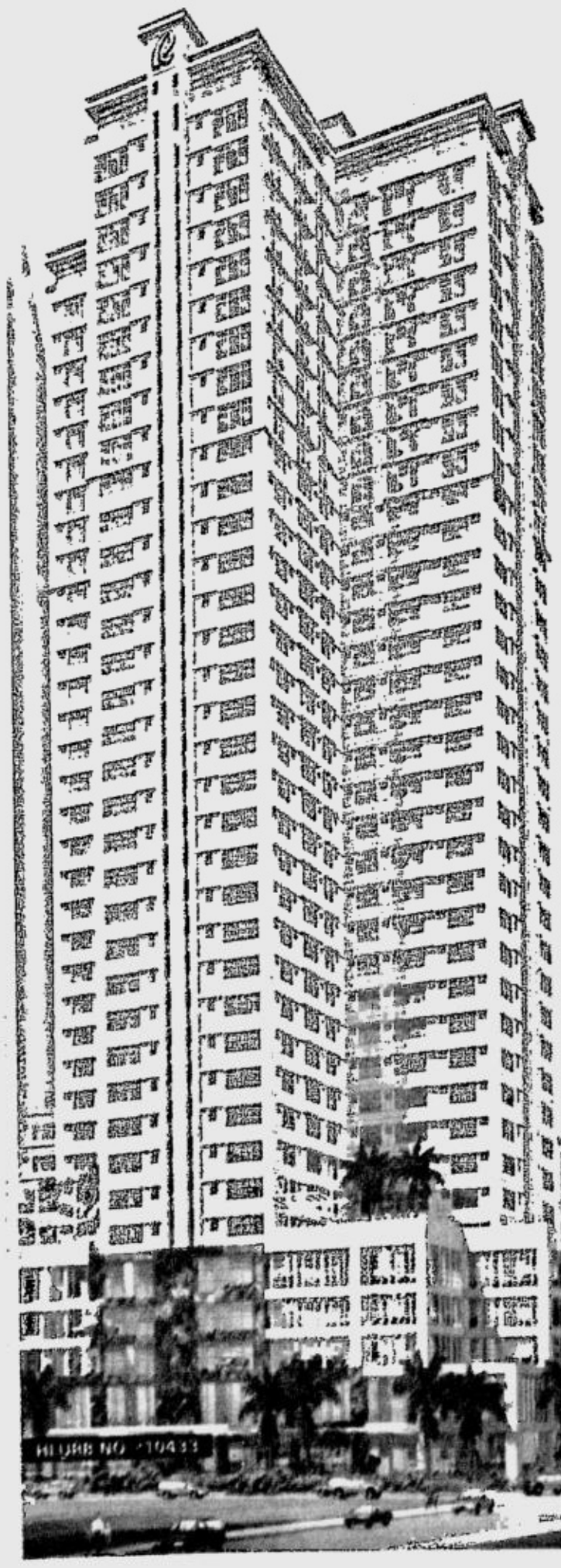

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Actual Photos of Model Unit

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FTA supports gov't review of tariff structure

THE FAIR Trade Alliance said it was supporting the decision of the government to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing tariff structure, taking into account the level of the country's economic development.

FTA lead convenor Wigberto Tañada said several local industries and agricultural cropping systems "have already closed or in various stages of collapse due largely to the unilateral and accelerated tariff reduction program in industry and agriculture."

"It is time to take a pause and reverse the liberalization process by having a tariff review," he said, stressing the need for the government to embark on a clear agro-industrial development that will deepen and broaden modernization of industry and agriculture.

Tañada pointed out that based on World Trade Organization (WTO) reports as of May 31, 2003, Thailand was enforcing a 40-percent definitive duty on Indonesia's floating glass, a 51-percent duty on Korean stainless steel, and a 128.11-percent duty on South Africa's flat hot-rolled steel.

"These rates are unthinkable in the Philippine setting, where securing safeguard duties is a litigious and expensive process despite the Safeguards Measures law," he said.

"Tariff calibration, whether upward or downward, is meaningless if it is not undertaken in the context of strengthening the Philippine agro-industrial base and its capacity to grow and create jobs," Tañada stressed.

FTA is also calling on the government to address with decisiveness other equally important survival issues ailing the industry such as the high cost of doing business, widespread smuggling of goods, and the unchecked dumping into the domestic market of excess foreign products. These factors, the group said, were tilting the playing field against local industry players and agricultural producers.

Tañada expressed hope that the government would undertake corrective measures by stopping further liberalization and reorienting current trade policies to provide more protection to agriculture and industry.

Foreign direct investments down 76% to $14M in first two months

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOREIGN direct investments registered with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas fell by 76 percent in the first two months to $14 million from year-ago level.

Data from the BSP's international department showed that FDI inflows in January to February this year stood $45 million lower than the $59 million registered in the same period last year.

However, the BSP expects FDI inflows to significantly improve this year as investors started to become more bullish in the past few months.

More inflows are expected in view of the privatization of National Power Corp.'s assets and the prospective investments in the mining sector following a Supreme Court ruling allowing foreigners to participate in mining projects.

The total FDIs in the first two months of the year were broken down as follow: financial intermediation, $5 million; wholesale and retail trade, $5 million; manufacturing, $3 million, and real estate, renting and business, $1 million.

The biggest source of direct investments during the period was Singapore, which pumped in $6 million or better than the $2 million last year.

Other major contributors were the United States ($4 million); Japan ($1 million) and Switzerland ($1 million).

In 2004, FDIs registered with the BSP slumped by 54.3 percent to $680.27 million from a year ago amid the uncertain business environment. It was the first time since 2001 that FDI to the country had fallen below the $1-billion mark, reflecting a number of investor concerns last year despite an improved economic performance.

The slowdown also showed that the higher-than-expected domestic economic growth of 6.1 percent posted by the country last year was driven largely by consumption rather than investment spending.

FDI inflows to the Philippines steadily rose from $857.87 million in 2001 to $1.43 billion in 2002 and to $1.49 billion in 2003 before declining last year.

However, foreign direct investments inflows to the country still paled in comparison to those the rest of developing Asia was getting.

Net FDIs to the region rose from a post-currency crisis and post-dotcom bubble low of $49 billion in 2002 to about $62 billion in 2004, based on estimates by the World Bank.

Like in previous years, the bulk of the FDI inflows was cornered by China, accounting for $53 billion of the total.

Other than China, other big beneficiaries of FDIs in the region were Hong Kong and Singapore.

A STAFF of Jetstar Asia Airways assists passengers before boarding the Airbus A320 for the airline's inaugural flight on Wednesday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Jetstar, the low-budget carrier operated by Australia's Qantas Airways Ltd., will become the third discount airline to operate in the Philippines, servicing the Manila-Singapore route. AP

Boy Chan's legacies

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

AT 8 a.m. last April 20, an overflowing crowd filled the chapel of Greenhills Memorial Park in Cagayan de Oro. People from all walks of life, from poor farmers to senior government officials, had come to pay their last respects to Rufo Chan Jr. Boy, as he was fondly called, was the regional executive director of the Department of Agriculture's (DA) Northern Mindanao Region (Region 10).

Background

I first met Boy when I was the agriculture undersecretary for operations in 2000. He had the unique skill of being good at both task and people management. Assistant regional director Joel Rodinas described him this way: "Boy was a workaholic. He worked very long hours to better serve his constituents. He often told us to try to clear our desks of all pending matters at the end of the day, because the next day would bring new challenges. Yet Boy always took the time to talk to us about our personal situations. He really took good care of us."

Aside from being an exemplary manager, Boy blazed new trails and left important legacies for agricultural development. Some of these have yet to be adopted on a national scale.

Extension worker incentives

Together with then regional executive director (now undersecretary) Gomer Lassam, Boy pioneered the practice of giving extension work incentive pay based on performance, rather than giving this pay automatically.

When 17,000 DA extension workers were devolved to the municipal governments, most automatically received a standard P2,000 monthly incentive pay from the DA, regardless of their individual performances. This resulted in many not giving the required reports to DA.

It was discovered that many extension workers were often used for non-agricultural tasks given by their new bosses, the municipal mayors. Thus, the DA agricultural development and technology transfer programs suffered, and the country's agricultural growth slowed down.

But not in Region 10. Together with the local government units, Boy implemented a "no-report, no-incentive" policy. Those who gave sub-standard reports would get only 50 percent to 90 percent of the incentive pay, depending on their shortfalls. The rest would get anywhere from 100 percent and above, depending on the extent of their superior performance. Since the savings from the sub-standard performers were given to the exceptional ones, the latter were more than amply rewarded.

Because of his success, we asked Boy to be the main architect for the nationwide implementation of this scheme. Today, 17,000 extension workers wake up everyday knowing their incentives will no longer come automatically, but will have to be earned.

This resulted in a significant improvement in their attitude and performance. Nevertheless, there is still a need for fine tuning in some regions for this performance-based incentive system.

Information for farmers

To help small farmers bargain for better prices from the buyers of their products, Boy arranged the daily radio broadcasts of these products' wholesale prices. Knowing that cell phones now reach the smallest barrios, Boy also arranged for interested farmers to get for free wholesale prices through automatic daily text messages. This was done through Chikka, which has links to major service providers like Globe Telecom and Smart. In exchange for this free service, Chikka collects P2.50 for every inquiry they get from a farmer. This arrangement has yet to be duplicated in several regions.

In addition, Boy initiated the daily posting in the Region 10 website of agricultural commodity prices in the region's main market centers. When he realized that other regions were not going to do this, he withdrew this posting for fear that his region would be at a disadvantage. However, it has been resumed recently. It is hoped that other regions would follow this practice for the benefit of better inter-regional trade.

For example, Region 10 currently does cross-region programming of tomato production. To prevent a surge in the prices of tomatoes in Metro Manila whenever there is a typhoon in Northern Luzon's tomato-growing areas, Region 10 programs the delivery to Metro Manila of a large amount of tomatoes. However, if the typhoon does not materialize, the Northern Mindanao farmers are at a loss as to where to sell their excess tomatoes because they do not know the tomato prices in other regions. Posting these prices would greatly solve this problem.

Other contributions

Boy has left many other legacies for the rest of the country to follow. One is the commodity cluster approach, where all stakeholders involved with a given commodity plan, produce and market their products together in a systematic way. They then work together with other commodity groups to have a coherent coordinated agricultural development strategy.

For example, the tomato group works with other vegetable groups through the Northern Mindanao Vegetable Producers Association (Norminveggies) headed by Marcelino Remotigue. This vegetable association, in turn, works with 28 other agricultural commodity associations through the Chamber of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Industries in Northern Mindanao (Caffinormin) led by Edwin Andot. Much of this organizational work was spearheaded by Boy, and still has to be duplicated in many other areas of the country.

Boy has indeed left many legacies, including his creativity, passion for work in order to serve, and compassion for others. We must not only acknowledge his legacies, but also pursue and expand them, especially where they have not been implemented nationwide. We will miss you, Boy Chan. We will never forget you, because you are forever with us through your legacies.

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary of agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil @ yahoo.com or telefax 8516635)

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- Upon approval of the rehabilitation plan, PPI is willing to swap the traditional plans with a fixed value plan earning 7% net p.a. compounded interest with maturity in 2010. This amount represents more than a full return of premium, and far exceeds the plan termination value provided for, under our contracts.
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Aboitiz firm acquires Transco assets in Subic

Coco farmers buck transfer of CIIF

By Christine A. Gaylican

SMALL coconut farmers groups have opposed the planned transfer of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF) Oil Group of Companies to the Department of Agriculture.

The Coconut Industry Reform Movement Inc. (Coir), the Philippine Ecumenical Action for Community Empowerment Foundation Inc. (Peace Foundation) and Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (Pakisama) said in separate statements that it would be improper to transfer the group of companies to the government agency as this would disrupt the operations of the private firm, which was now a subsidiary of the United Coconut Planters Bank.

"The plan is skewed ... since CIIF is a private entity and not a GOCC (government-owned and controlled corporation)," said CIIF executive Joey Faustino in an interview.

COIR is a coalition of three national peasant organizations and six non-government firms.

The groups issued the statements in reaction to Malacañang's plan to transfer CIIF to DA in preparation for the eventual recovery and management of the coco levy fund.

The coco levy fund, now estimated at P54 billion, has been tapped to create the CIIF which manages the seven oil mills and companies involved in the processing of coconut-based products.

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ABOITIZ group's Subic Enerzone Corp. has acquired for P29.4 million the sub-transmission assets of the National Transmission Corp. in Subic Bay and Olongapo City.

The contract involves 7.24 circuit-kilometers of TransCo's sub-transmission lines, including the Olongapo-SBMA Lines 1 and 2, Olongapo-SBMA Line 3 and Subic-SBMA Line 4.

Also included in the purchase agreement were the disconnection switches at the Kalaklan Metering Point in Olongapo City.

During the signing ceremonies yesterday, Subic Enerzone president Jaime Jose Aboitiz said the agreement would entail huge additional investments from the three-year-old firm.

"The (Aboitiz) group is very bullish on Subic. This just shows our level of commitment and confidence in the growth potential of the Subic Freeport and the Olongapo area," he said.

Subic Enerzone was also keen on acquiring some of Transco's 100-megavolt-ampere (MVA) substations in the area.

Aboitiz said Subic Enerzone's acquisition of Transco's sub-transmission assets would improve the power firm's ability to deliver power to its customers, most of which were huge power users.

Transco president and chief executive Alan Ortiz added that this would improve the reliability of power supply in the Subic Freeport.

This contract is the first agreement with an economic zone and the fourth to be signed by Transco this year.

The state firm aims to forge 28 sub-transmission asset sale agreements in 2005.

Transco has so far sold some P500 million worth of sub-transmission assets via 14 contracts, including the one with Subic Enerzone.

Transco has more assets to sell off, including some big potential sales to the Lopez-led Manila Electric Co., the largest power distributor in the country.

RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, mandates Transco to sell all its sub-transmission assets, which are usually rated at 69 kilovolts and below.

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Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0944	1.0849

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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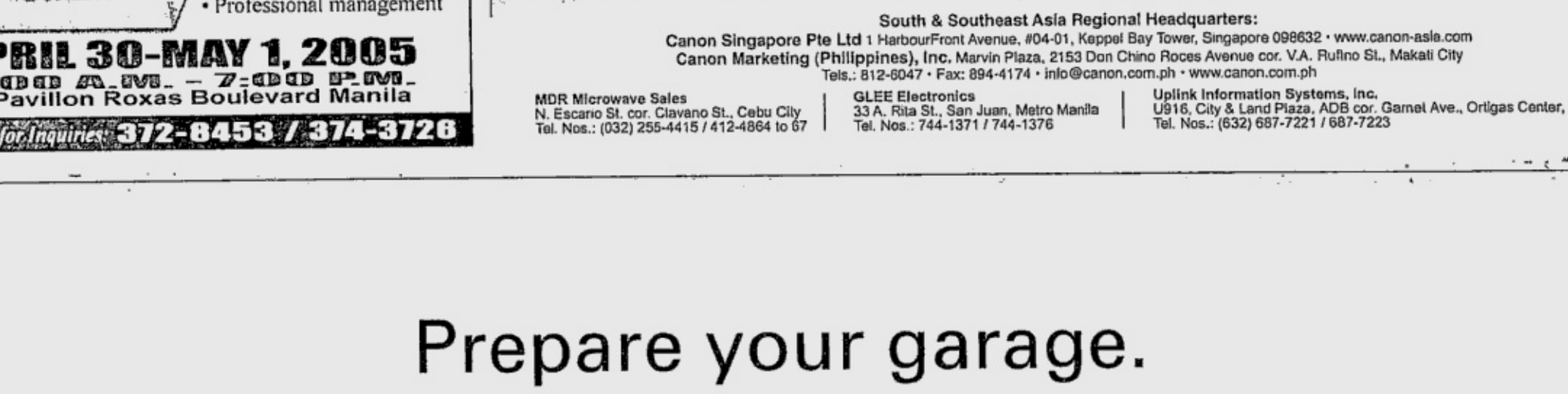

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IC seen seeking more funds, changes in charter

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By Michelle V. Remo

THE INSURANCE Commission said it would need more resources and additional funds if it were to be tasked to regulate the troubled pre-need industry.

Insurance Commissioner Benjamin Santos said in a briefing on Wednesday that the commission lacked resources and that regulating pre-need firms would be an added burden.

"We will definitely need more resources," said Santos.

Santos said the Insurance Commission was not even "appropriately computerized." He said the current systems were not hooked up with its departments and with the companies it monitors.

He said the commission had been seeking funds from the Department of Budget and Management for the computerization program.

His office hopes to get P30 million from the DBM to jumpstart the project, Santos said. The DBM is expected to get the money from the insurance fund, which is composed of the taxes collected from insurance companies.

Santos said the Insurance Commission was also reiterating its call for amendments to its charter if it were to regulate the pre-need industry.

He said the Insurance Commission should be allowed to operate independently, just like the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, to have more flexibility in undertaking its regulatory function. Currently, the Insurance Commission operates as an attached agency of the Department of Finance.

The commission was also seeking exemption from the Salary Standardization Law to be able to attract high-quality staff.

While admitting that it is still lacking the muscle to regulate the pre-need sector, the Insurance Commission says it is adopting the position of the DOF, which said the pre-need industry would be better off operating under the Insurance Commission's watch. Currently, the Securities and Exchange Commission regulates the pre-need industry.

"Pre-need and insurance are of the same character," he pointed out. Santos said he agreed with the DOF's position that the Insurance Commission could better regulate the pre-need industry because of its similarity with the insurance business, which the Insurance Commission was supervising.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima earlier said transferring the regulation of the pre-need industry from the SEC to the Insurance Commission was a wise proposal.

The transfer of the regulation of the pre-need industry to the Insurance Commission had been proposed years back, but was recently reiterated amid trust-fund deficiency problems hounding College Assurance Plan (CAP) and Pacific Plans.

VISITING Chinese President Hu Jintao (right) shakes hands with Filipino-Chinese business tycoon Lucio Tan upon arrival at the Naia on Tuesday. Hu is on his first state visit to the Philippines as Beijing steps up efforts to woo its resource-rich Southeast Asian neighbors and balance US influence. REUTERS

Malampaya stake sale still likely, says privatization unit

THE SALE of the 4.9 percent stake of PNOC Exploration Corp., a subsidiary of Philippine National Oil Co., in the Malampaya natural gas project in the future is still possible.

The Cabinet-level Privatization Council said this was still likely despite its recent move to shelve the prospective sale of the stake to a South Korean consortium.

Finance Undersecretary Gabriel Singson Jr. said the privatization of the PNOC EC's stake in the project "remains a condition" to the $175-million credit facility tapped by PNOC EC to purchase its 10-percent stake in the project. The condition was imposed by the national government in line with the sovereign guaranty provided for the credit facility.

The council recently rescinded the go-signal it gave to PNOC EC to sell close to half of its total shares in the project "in order to address issues raised by various sectors regarding the prospective sale."

A South Korean consortium led by LG International had offered to buy the shares. The process was already nearing completion when it was stopped.

The council said it wanted all issues addressed before proceeding with the sale at some future time. The rescission of the go-signal to PNOC EC "brings back the privatization process to where it was before March 22," the council said.

PNOC EC president Eduardo Mañalac said he "understands and supports the move by the council." Mañalac earlier said he hoped to use the proceeds of the impending sale to fund PNOC EC's petroleum exploration activities which include a joint seismic study at the South China Sea with Petro Vietnam and the China National Offshore Oil Co.

PGMA to name new SBMA head

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to appoint a new administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority this week, replacing Alfredo Antonio who will get another government post, a top SBMA official said.

Jose Calimlim, SBMA senior deputy administrator for operations, confirmed the information to the INQUIRER but declined to identify the new SBMA administrator and the reason behind the replacement of Antonio.

Calimlim, also president of the Subic Freeport Services Corp., said Ms Arroyo would announce Antonio's successor this week.

"The President has already chosen someone to replace him (Antonio) and she is going to announce it either tomorrow [Friday] or the following days," Calimlim told the INQUIRER.

He said he already knew Antonio's replacement but he wanted the announcement to come from the President.

Antonio, who was reportedly offered a higher government position by Ms Arroyo, has yet to comment on leaving his post.

Ms Arroyo appointed Antonio, Calimlim and SBMA Chair Franciso Licuanan III in September last year. They assumed their posts in October. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

PSBank to raise capital to ₱5B

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank, the thrift bank unit of banking leader Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., aims to raise its capital base to P5 billion within this year through a combined tier-2 capital offering and profit growth.

PSBank president Pascual Garcia III, in a press briefing before the bank's stockholders meeting, also announced the PSBank had posted a 44-percent growth in net profit to P117.5 million in the first quarter from a year ago. This, he said, was well within the full-year target of P630 million.

The bank, at present, has capital of P4.4 billion and some P45.8 billion in total resources.

The P5-billion capital the bank aims to build this year will meet the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' minimum capital requirement for a universal or expanded commercial bank.

"Part of it (capital-raising) will come from improved profitability," Garcia said, adding that the rest would come from the bank's tier 2 or subordinated debt issuance

It will be the first time PSBank would be tapping the capital markets. Garcia said the terms of the issuance would be finalized within the next 60 days.

He said proceeds from the issuance would be used for the bank's long-term expansion.

"It will help us put in place escalating growth in the years ahead," Garcia said.

Last year, PSBank opened 29 new branches. It is set to open 11 more branches next month, acquiring certain branch licenses from parent bank Metrobank and bringing its total network to 150.

In the first quarter, sustained momentum in the consumer banking business resulted in a 34-percent growth in this segment over the same period last year.

As of March, mortgage and auto loans rose by 24.5 percent and 30.4 percent, respectively while personal loans grew by a hefty 95.2 percent over last year.

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The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the support of its appointed transaction advisor, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is inviting private sector participation through long-term concession agreements, in electricity generation in the off-grid areas of the Philippines. As a first step, it has identified three off-grid areas, namely **Marinduque, Tablas** and **Romblon**, with a combined capacity of 15 MW, as pilots to conduct a competitive selection process to be held in June, 2005.

Interested parties are requested to submit a formal Expression of Interest, including a brief profile of their Company, to be received at the address below along with a registration fee of Php5,000 made payable to the National Power Corporation. Once registered, they will be given an information memorandum and other documents relating to the program's investment opportunity. Registration starts on April 27, 2005.

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Metrobank to sell more idle assets

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN Bank and Trust Co. plans to sell several of its P61 billion worth of bad assets this year through another Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) deal.

The bank is inclined to proceed with the sale even without the perks previously offered to such transactions.

Metrobank senior vice president for corporate planning Bernardito Lapuz told reporters during the bank's stockholders meeting on Wednesday that Metrobank was planning another SPV initiative to reduce the bank's bad assets.

The bank has some P32 billion worth of non-performing loans (NPLs) and another P29 billion in real and other properties owned and acquired (ropoas).

"SPV is still part of our initiative. We have live discussions right now, but we can't disclose the amount involved," Lapuz said.

He said the bank had obtained from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas a certificate of eligibility to sell certain bad assets.

Even before the SPV Law was passed in 2002, Metrobank had held a wholesale sale of bad assets without the benefit of fiscal incentives.

The SPAV Law or Republic Act 9182, which lapsed early this month waived the documentary stamp tax, the capital gains tax and the e-VAT (expanded value added tax) and reduces the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent on SPV transactions.

"Apart from that, we're approaching it from retail and institutional basis. Internally or through our branches—we're having retail auctions and we've been getting good response and good margins," Lapuz said.

"We also continue to accredit real estate brokers to dispose of properties and we're looking at potential joint venture deals with good names —those among the country's top three developers with really good capability to develop properties," he said.

PSE chief named one of Asia's top business lawyers

LIM

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) president and chief executive officer Francis Lim was named one of the leading business lawyers in Asia, according to a survey conducted by Asialaw, a law and legal practice magazine in the region.

Asialaw's 2005 Leading Lawyers Survey cited Lim, who was recognized for his work in dispute resolution, as one of the lawyers who practitioners at international law firms most frequently turn to when referring legal work.

The poll results reflect one of the most extensive legal surveys in Asia. Thousands of questionnaires were sent to legal experts and law firm clients in the region, asking them to recommend individual lawyers in different practice areas. The results of the survey will be published in Asialaw's June issue.

The poll aims to identify Asia's leading law firms. Asialaw will use the poll results to map the landscape of legal practices in the region

PSE/ B9

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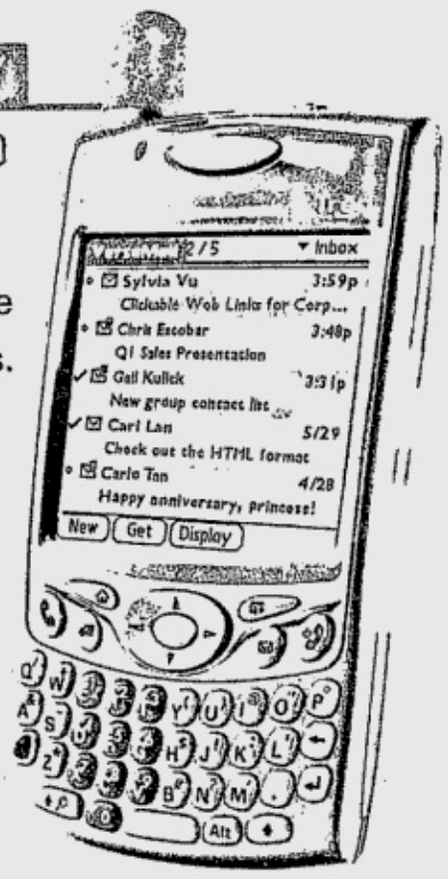

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* Suggested retail price. [1]Email, messaging and web access require data services from a mobile service provider at an additional cost. ISP may also be required. Pricing varies by service provider. [2]Requires expansion card, sold separately

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BITS Clips

Fully Booked sale

FULLY Booked at the Powerplant Mall is having a summer super sale ongoing until May 1. All titles will be discounted from 20 to 70 percent off retail prices, with special discounts on limited edition collectibles and figurines. Fully Booked offers the widest selection of quality reading material available in the local market. From hard-to-find titles to the latest bestsellers, there are books on their shelves to satisfy every literary craving. To inquire about titles or reserve copies, call customer service at 756-5001 to 04. Fully Booked is located at the Powerplant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

Li Li's new lunch

LI LI Cantonese Restaurant, the signature restaurant of Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila, introduces new lunch offerings starting May 1. Li Li, which prides itself in being able to serve best quality dim sum, will showcase this sumptuous specialty in both lunch offerings. Enjoy a productive lunch in the comfort and privacy of Li Li by availing yourself of its new business lunch starting May 2. The 5-course menu includes an array of appetizing dim sum delights, main course, and dessert. Following the Cantonese tradition, Li Li commences its weekly Yum Cha (which means "to drink tea") this May. Sample Li Li's Yum Cha at a promotional price of P780 from May 1 to June 30. Li Li is at the 5th floor and open daily for lunch and dinner. For inquiries, call 245-1234.

OTS photo contest

HUNDREDS of photographers from different places, notably members of camera clubs affiliated with a federation, will try to capture in their lenses the best shots of the world-famous Hundred Islands in western Pangasinan as well as some exciting scenes and happenings during an on-the-spot photo contest from April 29 to May 1. The photo contest has two categories: the Hundred Islands and activities. Cash prizes are at stake. The organizer is the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation in coordination with the town of Alaminos. Major sponsor is Fujifilm. For more details, call FPPF at 843-5341 or 813-7420.

Fashion promo

SONY Ericsson and Global Wireless Connections recently teamed up to bring consumers a celebration of fashion and imaging innovation with a special fashion promo ongoing until April 30. As the principal sponsor of the recently concluded Philippine Fashion Week, Sony Ericsson launched a special promo with fashion retailers like Cutie Femme, Folded and Hung, Guess, and Memo. It offers Sony Ericsson mobile phone users discounts of up to 10 percent in all items. A 20-percent off is further extended to Sony Ericsson users who download the special promo logo of the partner shops and make a minimum purchase. Customers may download the logo by texting SONYERICSSON<name of retail shop> to 2955. The promo is open to all Globe and Smart subscribers. For details, text SONYERICSSON to 2955.

Yin, yang at Edsa-Shangri-La

EDSA Shangri-La's Summer Palace introduces the best of Eastern fare presented with contemporary Western flair until April 30. Patterned after the emperor's playground, Edsa Shangri-La's Summer Palace takes diners to a journey through courtyards and tranquil lakes of Beijing. The restaurant's majestic setting is in perfect harmony with the authentic cuisine on offer, which has always been its trademark. This month, Edsa Shangri-La's Summer Palace takes Chinese fine dining to a higher level with delectable specialties such as pumpkin soup with red beans, shark's fin with grilled rib-eye steak and broccoli, lapu-lapu steamed with ginger and honey and prawn salad with avocado and lemon mayonnaise. Summer Palace is located at the mezzanine level of Edsa Shangri-La Manila. For inquiries, call 633-8888 extension 2738 or 2739.

Charge to recharge

IT IS quite ironic that in the province known for nurturing the beans that perk everyone up emerges a place where the pace was structured to do exactly the opposite: The Farm in San Benito, Batangas-a health resort where life will pull you back to your birthright of fresh, clean and untampered living.

The very name of this world-class health resort evokes the bareness and simplicity it surrounds its guests with. The Farm shuns from the usual trappings of a tropical resort. No welcome *bandurias*. No squealing jet skis. No rowdy picnickers.

As soon as you step in, you are welcomed by the whistling breeze, the gentle sound of cascading water, and the soothing sound of calm. Throughout 48 hectares of greens, one can see the merging of the manicured gardens and the wild flowers on the foothills of Mount Malayarat. In this perfectly landscaped setting, 25 private suites and villas are waiting to embrace you in peace.

Sanctuary

The Farm is more than just a place of relaxation. It heals. It is a sanctuary that comes complete with a medical community that specializes in alternative, non-Western diagnostic and treatment of degenerative, acute, and chronic diseases. It is the only health resort and spa in Asia where living foods are served. The healthy gourmet menu boasts of the "85/15", a special kind of food preparation that reflects the ratio of raw to cooked. As part of The Farm's proven curative approach, the "85/15" detoxifies not just the body but the mind as well.

Amidst the tranquil surroundings, one may be surprised to find a fully functioning medical system. Programs such as medical consultation, iris analysis, live blood cell analysis, colon detox and psycho-emotional therapy are offered. These are holistic cures that are complemented by the healing nature that envelops The Farm.

If a guest wishes to simply regain her breathing space, a relaxing weekend can be provided as well by this verdant oasis. The Salus Per Aqua Spa is perfect for those whose soul and body are in need of rest. From the Filipino *hilot* to traditional Asian body scrubs, the spa has been designed to quench you with the rest and relaxation you are thirsty for.

Indeed, The Farm is heaven on earth. A must-destination for anyone who wishes to leave all worries and stress behind. And in this Eden of a resort, what can be a more fitting credit card than the one that shields you from worries as well: BPI Express Credit.

BPI Express Credit's SIP

BPI Express Credit's Special Installment Plan (SIP) allows you to pay for your resort or hotel bills in more budget-friendly installments, at lower, fixed interest rates, with absolutely no hidden charges. The BPI Express Credit Classic/ Burgundy card offers a painless interest rate of 2.9 percent. Even as you're on your way to San Benito, BPI Express Credit starts helping you manage your expense. If you use your Petron-BPI MasterCard to pay for gas at any participating Petron gas station, you get a 2-percent rebate on your purchase thus saving about P0.56 per liter.

On your way to and from The Farm, you'll be glad to know that BPI Express Credit cards are accepted in the many restaurants, retail shops, and supermarkets you will be passing by. This is definitely the card you need for last-minute buys during the trip. BPI Express Credit Card is actually accepted in over 16,000 local establishments. You can also do cash advance transactions at any of 1,200 BPI ATMs nationwide. And you can secure your SLEX E-pass transponders and load anytime with your BPI Express Credit Card.

Like the relaxing powers of The Farm, BPI is always ready to take care of anything that may stress you out. If you want to report a lost card, request a temporary increase in your credit line, inquire about your card balance or request a reallocation of your credit limit from regular to an SIP line or vice-versa, help is just five numbers away at BPI's 24-hour Customer Service Hotline (89-100).

Chance for a Volvo

As you drive to Batangas, you begin to entertain thoughts of peaceful and safe surroundings. And wouldn't it be wonderful if such calming surroundings already begin inside your car? Thoughts like these may just come true. With BPI Express Credit, you get a chance to win the one car that is guaranteed to provide you with superior safety and comfort-Volvo. This car, considered to be the safest in the world, may just be yours soon. Simply charge a minimum purchase worth P500 to your BPI Express Credit card for a chance to win one of four life-saving Volvos in the BPI Volvo Lifestyle Promo.

A singularly blessed cardholder of the BPI Edge or Mini Edge will get to drive away a sinfully sleek Volvo S40 Sports Sedan. A very lucky cardholder of a BPI Express Credit Classic Burgundy or BPI Express Credit Blue MasterCard will get to hold the keys to the Volvo V50 Sports Wagon. An extremely successful top executive who transacts with his BPI Express Credit Gold MasterCard will find the S80 Executive Sedan a perfect complement to his privileged lifestyle. The rakishly handsome Volvo XC90 SUV awaits a very fortunate Petron-BPI MasterCard cardholder. Promo period is until April 30.

So pack your bags. Leave your worries behind. You are about to be healed, rejuvenated, and pampered at The Farm. And be sure to bring your BPI Express Credit Card: The card to which you can charge your truly recharging vacation.

For its 36th National Marketing Conference, the Philippine Marketing Association lets you navigate towards Filipino Brand Excellence

DAY 1 : May 25, 2005
Session Chair: **Dr. Nick Fontanilla**
President, The Asia Pacific Center for Research

8:00 – 9:30 Registration/ Networking/ Morning Coffee

9:30 – 10:15 Opening Ceremonies
Keynote address: **Mr. Roberto De Ocampo***
President, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)

10:15- 11:15 Session One:
A Business Philosophy for Extreme Marketing: Pushing Your Limits in a Crisis Economy
A presentation on the business philosophies surrounding extreme marketing that have maximized marketing potentials in a challenging convergent environment aptly applied to the Asian Region as well as the local scenarios.

Speaker: **Mr. Bienvenido Policarpio**
Executive Vice President, Prudential Group of Companies, President, Dale Carnegie Philippines

11:15- 12:15 Session Two:
Customer Relationship Management: Building Technology to the Extreme

Speaker: **Mr. Mark Yambot**
Director for Corporate Affairs, Microsoft Philippines, Inc.

Lunch Break

1:30 – 1:45 Ice Breaker

1:45 – 2:45 Session Three:
Pain Makes Gains: Pharmaceutical Companies Going Beyond Pain
Proven local brand strategic applications in the pharmaceutical business that challenge global market leaders and players in creating ideal synergies for a convergent market.

Speaker: **Mr. Carlos "Do" Ejercito**
President, United Laboratories Group

2:45 – 3:45 Session Four:
The New Empire: Shaping the Future of High-Rise Condominiums
Guiding principles in braving the battle against big brothers in the real estate business despite the threatening and unstable socio-economic scenarios affecting business growth.

Speaker: **Mr. Luke Tan**
Director, Investor Relation, Megaworld

3:45 – 4:00 Break

4:00 – 5:00 Session Five:
Challenging Global Brands through Sports Marketing Events
Creative marketing executions that enliven the palette of consumers using convergent applications of events marketing thus bringing product promotion to extremely challenging standards.

Speaker: **Mr. Christophe Bezu**
Senior Vice President, Adidas-Salomon AG, Hong Kong

5:00 – 5:15 Recap by Session Chair.

Day 2 : May 26, 2005
Session Chair: **Dr. Karen De Asis**
Marketing Director, De La Salle Graduate School of Business
Marketing Consultant

8:00 – 9:00 Networking Coffee

9:00 – 10:00 Session Six:
Mega Formulas for Extreme Marketing from a Marketing Guru
A discussion on strategic principles of extreme marketing as presented by the world-renowned Hermawan Katajaya.

Speaker: **Mr. Hermawan Kartajaya**
President & Leading Service Officer, MarkPlus&Co.

10:00- 11:00 Session Seven:
The Telecommunications Industry Revealed: Telecommunications Convergence: Challenge to the Extreme!
Current trends and future strategic directions of the highly evolving telecommunications industry amidst the challenge of simultaneous product and market convergence.

Speaker: **To be announced**

11:00- 12:00 Session Eight:
The New Imperative in Today's Convergence in Marketing: Sustainable Growth
A closer look at the "must haves" in dealing with the challenges of convergence in marketing for businesses to thrive and achieve sustainable growth.

Speaker: **Mr. Gavin Coombes**
Vice President, Euro RSCG Asia Pacific

Lunch Break

1:00– 1:15 Ice Breaker 2

1:15 – 1:30 Agora Awards Launch / Other PMA Activities

1:30 – 2:30 Session Nine:
Mall Mania: Shop Until You Drop!
Revelations in the bullet-speed growth of the retail industry and the magnetic attraction of a converging business to a market mix of unique styles but common interests.

Speaker: **Ms. Grace Magno**
Head of Marketing, Araneta Group of Companies

2:30- 3:30 Session Ten:
New Rules in Market Leadership: Success Stories in Non-traditional Bank Marketing
Non-traditional rules applied to traditionally common practices that have created raves in the banking sector.

Speaker: **Mr. Tomas Victor Mendoza**
SAVP, Banco de Oro Universal Bank

3:30 – 3:45 Break

3:45 – 4:30 Session Eleven:
Creativity on the Edge: Media & Marketing Convergence
Strategic partnering innovations that unify media creativity and marketing excellence gearing to meet the challenge of convergence.

Speaker: **Mr. Nicanor Gabunada**
Senior Vice President for Integrated Sales & Marketing
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Company

4:30 – 5:15 Session Twelve:
Advertising Convergence: Bringing Filipino Consumers Closer to the Brand through Humor
A compilation of the interesting facets of humor in advertising that has sent light messages to the market but delivered solid bottom results to target sales.

Speaker: **Mr. Joselito Ortega**
Chairman & CEO, BrandLab, Inc.

5:15 – 5:45 Closing Session:
The Road to Recovery through Market Convergence
A presentation of ingenuous approaches for business revivals and growth in a converging market.

Speaker: **Mr. Jose Jesus Rocos**
Professor, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)
President, Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APMF)

5:45 – 6:00 Recap by Session Chair

For full programme schedule and other details:

Tel. Nos.: 634-4890; 633-9470
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MARKETING CONVERGENCE

NFA to import rice, nears record level

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE NATIONAL Food Authority yesterday said it planned to import 400,000 metric tons of rice in May to cover the expected shortfall in domestic production.

National Food Authority Administrator Gregorio Tan Jr. said the planned tender on May 24 would bring the country's rice imports to 1.48 million metric tons.

This brings NFA close to reaching the highest recorded level of rice imports in 1997, when the country acquired 2 million metric tons at the height of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

The NFA said it had to import rice as farm output was expected to be adversely affected by drought prevailing over rice-producing regions.

Tan said the NFA planned to buy 300,000 tons of 25 percent broken variety and another 100,000 tons of iron fortified rice.

The NFA set a budget of P5.4 billion for non-iron fortified rice and P2.03 billion for the iron-fortified rice.

Possible source countries include Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and the United States.

Shipments were scheduled to arrive between June and August this year.

Tan said the imports were intended to cover the production shortfall in the third quarter.

The government earlier projected rice imports this year at 1.1 million to 1.6 million tons to meet expected demand, compared with imports of 985,000 tons in 2004.

He also noted that rice consumption has been steadily increasing.

Current domestic consumption was estimated at around 28,000 tons a day.

The NFA estimated that rice output in the first half was about the same as last year's production of 6 million tons.

The NFA also plans to buy 200,000 tons of rice in another buy tender on May 4.

The state-owned grains trading firm has already signed contracts to buy 887,500 tons of rice this year, mostly from Vietnam.

The government has also allowed private firms to import another 200,000 tons of rice this month and next month.

SE chief named one of Asia's . . .

From page B7

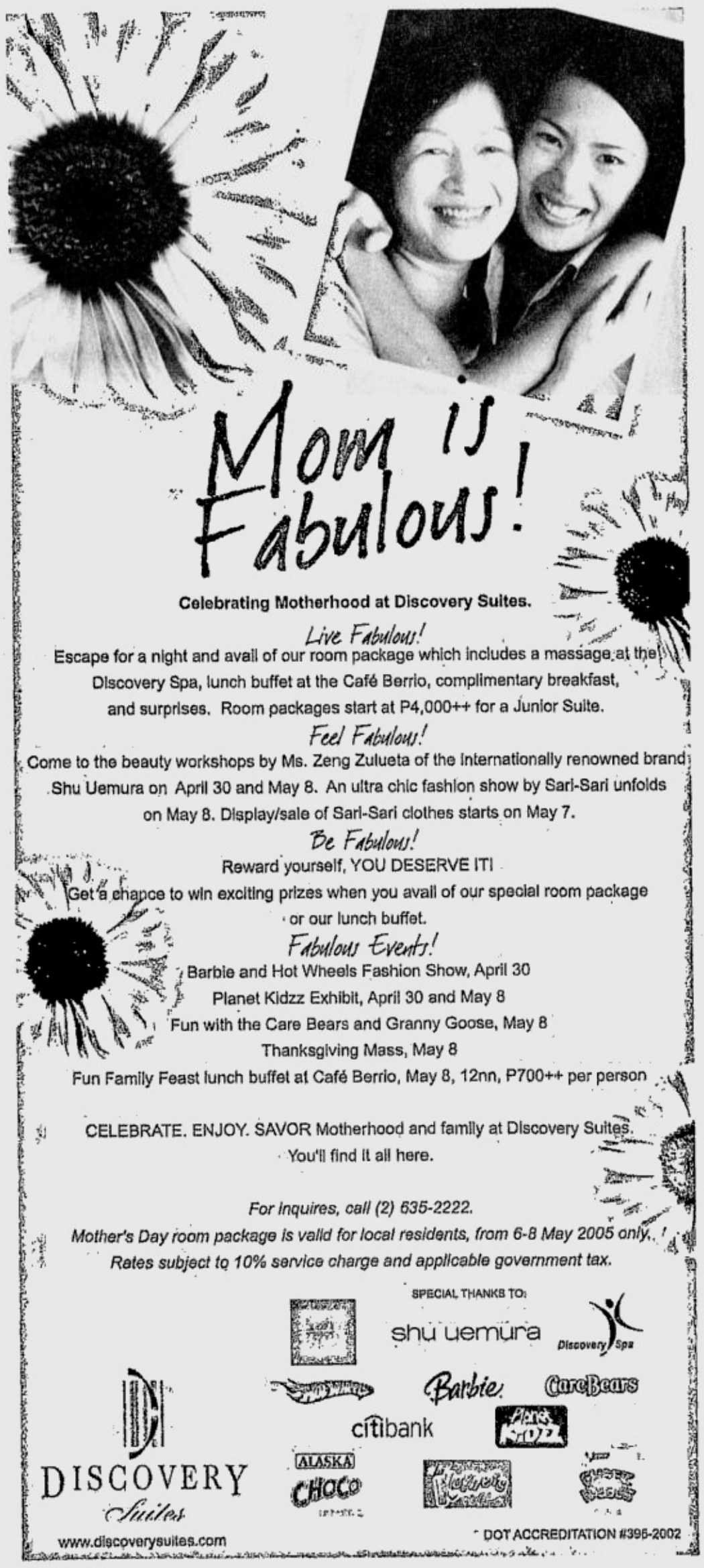
and, in the process, create an important reference tool for those seeking the best legal advice in Asia.

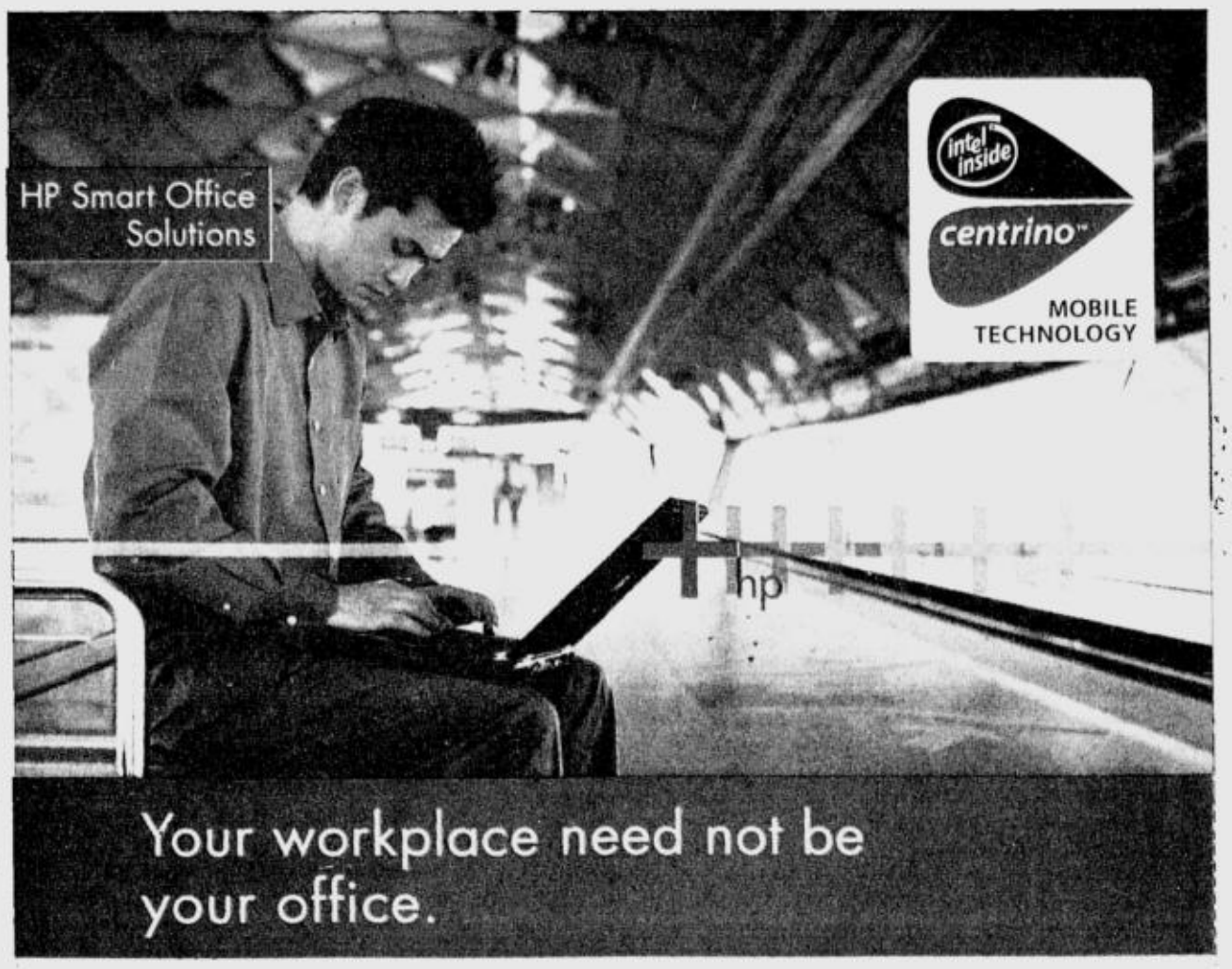
Asialaw Leading Lawyers is being published yearly by Asia Law and Practice, a specialist division of Euromoney Institutional Investor PLC.

Lim, a co-managing partner of Angara Abello Concepcion Regala & Cruz Law Offices (Accralaw) before assuming the PSE post in September last year, is batting for the creation of an alternative dispute resolution system for the stock market, where market players can resolve their disputes through mediation or arbitration instead of resorting to court proceedings which are notoriously known to be prolonged and tedious.

He is presently in Washington, D.C. with Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) officials where alternative dispute resolution is being taken up as one of the subjects in a two-week seminar sponsored by the US SEC.

Lim is also a professor at the Ateneo de Manila University College of Law and San Beda Graduate School of Law, and a professorial lecturer at the Philippine Judicial Academy, an institution primarily in charge of training judges and justices. He gives lectures for the mandatory continuing legal education program of the Philippine Supreme Court.





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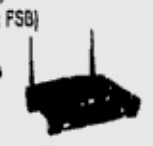

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- 60GB HDD
- Integrated Secure Digital (SD) slot
- DVD Writer (DVD+/-RW) MultiBay II drive (Hot Swappable)
- 10/100/1000 LAN (Broadband ready)
- High Speed 56K modem
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- 3-year, Worldwide Limited Warranty

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Promotion runs from April 12 to 30, 2005.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2015 Series of 2005.

GODIVA GOES TO BORACAY

The Godiva Safe Sea Beach Tour goes to Boracay this April 29 to May 1. Roving gorgeous Godiva Beach Buddies with irresistible freebies and swap offers are in store for Boracay guests this weekend. Free trials will be available for a chance to experience the 2-in-1 protection only Godiva Safe Sea can offer. Godiva Safe Sea Sunblock is the world's only solution against marine stingers such as jellyfish, sea lice, and corals. A product of years of extensive bio-technological research by Israeli scientists, Godiva Safe Sea is clinically tested in USFDA-approved hospitals. Waterproof and with UVA /UVB protection, it is available in two variants: SPF 30 for adults and SPF 30+ for kids. The Godiva Beach Tour is co-sponsored by Corporate Air, Boardwalk, Molecules, Happy Feet, Titania, Rebisco, Snicklers, Summit Natural Drinking Water, Celerity Fitness Water and Megapixels. Media partners are Yes FM, Love Radio, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Women's Journal and Manila Times. For information, e-mail info@godivaskincare.com.

RP meat products globally recognized

A PHILIPPINE-BASED meat processing company has gained global recognition for its high-quality meat toppings, which are now being positioned for export to other Southeast Asian countries.

Yum! Restaurants International (YRI), one of the world's largest operators of quick service restaurants (QSR), named CDO-Foodsphere Inc, a Philippine-based meat processing firm, as its most improved supplier in the 3rd Asia Franchise Awards held in Singapore March 16.

CDO is a supplier of meat toppings for Pizza Hut, one of the five major QSR brands owned by YRI. Other popular brands owned by YRI are Kentucky Fried Chicken, A&W, Long John Silver's, and Taco Bell, which are considered global leaders in chicken, hamburger, quick-service seafood, pizza and Mexican-style food categories, respectively.

YRI actually has 840,000 employees working in its more than 33,000 restaurants worldwide.

In bestowing the international award, YRI has recognized CDO, a leader in meat toppings production and canned meat processing in the Philippines, for its pursuit of brand standard excellence.

"This plum is rarely given to suppliers that can consistently produce excellent meat toppings. It is the first time that a Philippine company received such an international accolade," said Akel Galangan, CDO's regional sales manager and head of its foodservice sales group.

"With such recognition, CDO meat toppings are now considered globally acceptable, since YRI has a very stringent system of accrediting food suppliers," said Galangan.

He added the citation only proves that CDO products are now internationally competitive, as he disclosed the company's plan to supply meat toppings to all Pizza Hut outlets in Southeast Asia.

Meat toppings production is part of CDO's product portfolio offered by its hotels, restaurants and institutional (HRI) sales group, which accounts for 20 to 25 percent of the company's business.

CDO actually supplies meat toppings to 9 of every 10 QSRs in the Philippines.

The plan to supply meat toppings to other Southeast Asian countries is consistent with the company's recently launched export program targeting to ship out at least 50,000 cases of canned meat products worth $1 million or P55 million to different countries in 2005.

As one of the key players in the canned meat sector, CDO seeks to increase its exports to the Middle East, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia and Papua New Guinea and aims to penetrate the United States, Canada and other countries where there are large Filipino communities.

Bits Clips

YWCA VP keynotes meet

WORLD YWCA vice president Dr. Eun Kyung Park will be the guest of honor and speaker during the 30th mid-biennium meeting of the YWCA of the Philippines on April 29 and 30 with the theme "YWCA Women Development in the Third Millenium" to be held at the Great Eastern Hotel, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Park is a cultural anthropologist who has done research on Chinese ethnic groups abroad. The mid-biennium meeting will gather around 100 women leaders of YWCA in 26 local associations in the Philippines. A soft launch of the YWCA of the Philippines' coffee table book "A Gift of Faith: The YWCA Philippine Story" will also be held on April 29. Dr. Josefina D. Pineda, national president, invites all YWCA members. For inquiries, call national headquarters at 523-1467 or 524-7234.

PARK

Antipolo set for Sumakah

ANTIPOLO takes pride in the Sumakah festival. Sumakah means suman, mangga, kasuy and humaka-all products synonymous to Antipolo City. Hamaka, or the hammock, was the usual form of transportation for the upper-class Filipinos of yesteryears. Antipolo celebrates Sumakah on May 1. April 30 kicks off the festivities with a motorcade with the Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage from Antipolo Cathedral to Quiapo Church at 6 a.m., led by Mayor Angelito C. Gatlabayan and church dignitaries. At 7 p.m., the "Alay Lakad" of pilgrims following the image of Virgin Mary from Quiapo Church to Antipolo Cathedral. At 7:30 p.m., a drum and lyre competition is followed by a street-dancing competition. The colorful Sumakah Parade begins at 8 a.m.

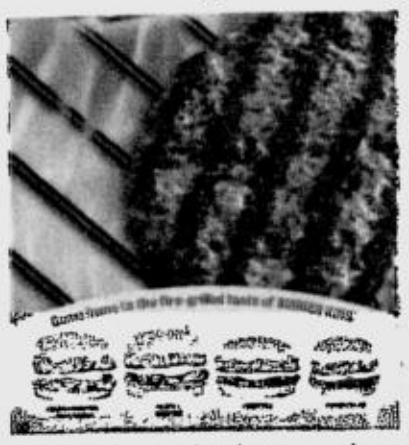
GATLABAYAN

SMINT IN PDA CONFAB

Smint Xylicare, the first dental candy with anti-cavities for healthy teeth, will be participating in the 97th Philippine Dental Association (PDA) annual convention and scientific meetings from May 2 to 6 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC). Smint Xylicare is the first mini-mint made with almost 100-percent Xylitol, a natural premium sugar-free substitute that is clinically proven to fight plaque and oral bacteria responsible for causing tooth decay. Signing the contract are Smint brand manager Michael F. Tandas and Mario E. Esquillo DMD, PDA president-elect and general chair of the convention. Smint Xylicare is owned by Chupa Chups SA and exclusively distributed by ADP Industries Corp.

ProductFILES

Get grilled with Burger King



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People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Israeli photo exhibit at The Podium

MALLGOERS will have the rare opportunity to see the works of renowned Israeli photographer Shai Ginott in "From the Beginning", an exhibit that will be showcased at The Podium from May 5 to 10. The exhibition is a joint project of the Embassy of Israel and The Podium.

"From the Beginning" is a breathtaking exhibit of Ginott's encounter with nature and a celebration of the light, earth, water, heaven and the world of flora and fauna-as dramatically described in the Biblical story of creation. "Then God said: 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters and let it divide the waters from the waters'" (Genesis 1:6).

The photographs in the exhibit portray imaginary landscapes composed of photos superimposed on one another. All were taken in Israel, the Negev Desert, the Mediterranean coast, the Sea Galilee, the Dead Sea, the forests of Galilee, the snow-capped peak of Mount Hermon. It follows the photographer's journey through the hot and dry summer, the rainy and cold winter, in the seasons of bird migration and in the flowering spring.

Juxtaposed with quotations from the Bible, the exhibit fuses the photographer's love of nature with her deep spirituality. Ginott describes her encounter with nature as "a complex ... deep multi-layered experience, like leafing through the pages of history, alternating between the world of reality and the imaginary between what has occurred in the past and what will happen in the future."

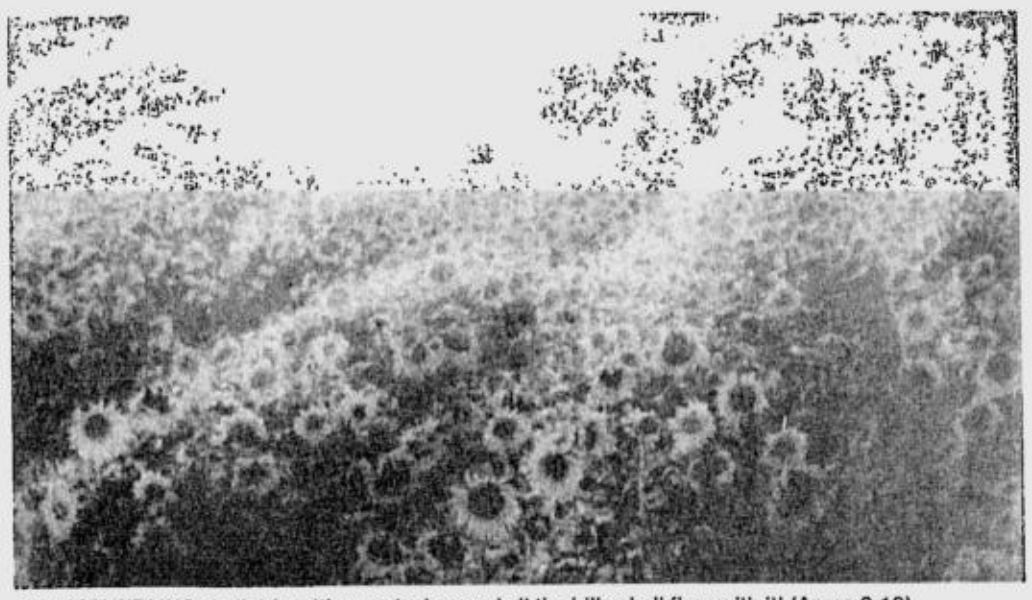
The photographer, on the other hand, says that reading the Bible is "like a journey". A journey of personal acquaintances with the Lord, with its landscapes and ancient and new sites, with the history of ages past and of recent times and archaeological remains serving as milestones.

Merging Ginott's photographs with words from the Bible has a dramatic dimension. The preservation of nature appears in the interaction between man and nature and his existence as an integral part of it. "Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it." (Genesis 2:15)

The beauty of nature and the wisdom of creation are expressed in the Psalms and in the words of the Prophets. "I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs water. (Isaiah 41:18)

The chronicles of generations of man, until the consolidation of the people of Israel and its settlement in the Land, recall a series of encounters with nature: the flood, the pillar of the cloud, the wanderings in the desert.

Shai Ginott was born in Jerusalem in 1958. A biologist by profession, her career as a fine arts and nature photographer began in 1984 as a director of the Israel Nature Reserves Authority. Her photographs have appeared in newspapers, periodicals and books, including the best seller, "Echoes of a Landscape", which won the Gold Prize of the Jerusalem International Book Fair in 1993. Other books in which her works have been featured include "A Place in the Heart, Jerusalem"; "Israel Das Heilige Land" and "Spectacular Israel", for which she also served as photo editor.



'THE MOUNTAINS shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it' (Amos 9:13)

Her photographs have been exhibited in Israel and abroad, among them in the Barbican Center in London and the Olympus Gallery in Tokyo.

"From the Beginning", which is currently on an Asia Pacific tour, will be showcased from May 5 to 10 at The Podium's Lounge Area in the mall's Second Level.

Graphic Expo '05 accepts entries for digital imaging, animation contests

ENTRIES are now being accepted for the annual digital imaging, animation, and art contests, whose winning works will be exhibited at the prestigious Graphic Expo 2005 slated at the Philippine Trade Training Center on June 1 to 4.

For the Digital Imaging Contest, qualified to join are photographers, digital artists, graphic designers, hobbyists and enthusiasts, each can submit up to 10 entries, measuring 10x15 inches including borders, based on his interpretation of the theme "Children".

The participants can capture photos and images digitally and manipulate them. All entries will be printed using YKL Fuji Frontier printer.

For the Animation Competition, invited to join are animation and design studios, production houses, schools, training institutions, animators, multimedia specialists and web masters, who will vie under two categories-amateur/student level, and professional. They can use any animation software, preferably Discreet.

Animation concept must be original, entertaining, and wholesome. Use of logos, brand names, and foul language and actions is not allowed.

Running time for the animation entry should be up to two minutes only for amateur/student level, and three minutes for professional. Entries should include concept and storyboard, name of company/school, contact person, telephone, fax, e-mail, and mobile number.

Copyright infringement will not be allowed and list of sources of audio-video materials used should be submitted with the entries, which must come in CD ROM format using Quick Time with 800x600 resolution and no compression. Audio format should be in 44khz 16 bits stereo.

For the Digital Art Competition, eligible to join are professional and amateur graphic and digital designers, web masters, photographers, and digital artists, who will compete under any of three categories-Digital Graphic Design, Digital Fine Art, and Web Design.

For preliminary judging, entries must be printed on A4-size photo or inkjet paper except for Web Design, in which entries will be submitted in URL form.

The participants can use scanned imagery and digital painting techniques through any available graphics software.

The entries must be accompanied with a brief, one-paragraph explanation of the artist's concept. Contestants can submit unlimited number of entries.

All entries to any of the three competitions-Digital Imaging, Animation, and Digital Art - should not have photos, images, symbols and artworks whose copyright belongs to another person.

All entries should include the name of the artist, address, company, telephone, fax, and email, and must be submitted to Fiera de Manila (896-0639, 896-0637, 899-6893; e-mail fiera@info.com.ph; website www.fmi.com.ph, www.graphicexpo.com.ph) not later than May 6, 2005.

Prizes in cash and in kind await the winners. Announcement and awarding of the winners will be held on June 1 at the opening ceremonies of the Graphic Expo 2005, which is now on its 10th year.

Graphic Expo is the country's premier trade show in desktop publishing, digital photography, pre-press, print production, large format printing, web publishing, multimedia, and animation, all based on a unique concept of digital workflow and process complementation involving various stages of production.

Graphic Expo is supported by IdN Club Philippines, Zone V Camera Club, eArt Philippines, SPPP, Philippine Center for Creative Imaging, and Animation Council of the Philippines, and sponsored by Fujifilm, Epson, HP Philippines, Gakken Philippines, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Designer Singapore, IT Update, Computerworld, Softrigger Interactive, Web Philippines, INQ7.net, BusinessWorld, Manila Bulletin, Mac Graphics Carranz, and Speed Magazine.

PAL BAGS PANA CUP

The Philippine Airlines Team bested tournament favorite PLDT myDSL in a fiercely fought final to clinch the 1st Pana Badminton Cup championship held April 16 at The Zone Badminton Courts in Makati. A total of 19 teams from Pana member companies participated in the event.

Shown are the members of the victorious PAL team displaying the Pana Badminton Cup with Pana president Blen Fernando of Alaska, Pana treasurer and tournament-in-charge Bobby Banaag of Plantersbank, and tournament director Rod Hinanay.

BITS Clips

Summer the New Age Way

WOULD you want to know what's in store for you this summer or for the rainy days to come? Eastwood City once again gathers the best psychics in the country for a one-of-a-kind Manghuhula Festival from April 29 to May 5. Give your summer days a little twist as you celebrate it the "New Age Way" with your future told and a chance to direct your fortune. Charms, crystals, and books will also be sold at the Psychic Festival Grounds to complete your unique New Age summer experience. For inquiries, call 687-6770 to 74 or 0917-EWCITY and look for Karen.

Summer art workshops

ART in the Park at Quezon Memorial Circle offers art workshops for children and adults from April 25 to May 30. Activities include drawing, painting and crafts. It will be conducted by Alma Quinto, past president of the Philippine Art Educators Association (Paea). For inquiries, call 0919-3874200, 435-3600 or 926-0193 (nighttime only), or visit Art in the Park, Administration Building, Quezon Memorial Circle.

Tia Maria's Cinco de Mayo

ON MAY 5, 1862, Mexico defeated the French forces in the battle of Puebla, thus winning the first war against a European power after gaining its independence from Spain. Since then, every May 5 is celebrated to commemorate this most memorable moment in Mexican history. Renowned for its Mexican cuisine, Tia Maria's joins Mexico in rejoicing by offering a Burrito Combo Meal to mark the occasion. The meal consists of a burrito, churros, and iced tea or lemonade for only P250. Aside from these, guests ordering the Burrito Combo Meal will get a free stuffed toy. This special Cinco de Mayo promotional offer runs from May 1 to 31. Other Mexican dishes are available for guests looking for their favorites. Tia Maria's branches are at Remedios, Morato, Megamall and Baguio.

Lifestyle Bazaar

THIS weekend all roads will lead to Le Pavillion Tent at Roxas Boulevard for this month's Lifestyle Bazaar. Open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on April 30 and May 1, the Lifestyle Bazaar was conceptualized especially for the discriminating shopper. Organized by Karl Edward International, the country's premier bazaar organizer, everyone is invited to check out the latest budget-friendly garments and accessories from top exporters and importers. Bazaar exhibitors will also offer deli treats like pasta sauces, salad dressing, cakes and pastries.

EK's fireworks display

ENCHANTED Kingdom invites you to the brightest, most spectacular celebration of its 10th anniversary. Witness magical skies illuminate in all its glory with the amazing "Spettacolo Pirotecnico (Fireworks of Art)", a grand 15-minute exhibition of breathtaking fireworks, kaleidoscopic laser lights, and brilliant beam effects all choreographed to a grand, sweeping orchestral suite. Experience this spectacle on the Saturdays of April and May at 9 p.m. (April 30, May 14 and 21). There's more. Enjoy tons of merrymaking with the all new entertainment shows at the Portabello and Jungle Outpost to be launched on April 30 and be enthralled with the magic of Lou Hilario on April 30, May 14 and 21.

MHPHS alumni homecoming

BATCH 1957 of the Marcelo H. del Pilar High School (MHPHS) in Malolos, Bulacan will hold its annual grand reunion on May 1. The affair will mark the class' 48th graduation anniversary. The venue for this year's homecoming will be the residence of Manny Mangaran, a member of the class, at Dona Crispina Subdivision, Barangay Agnaya, Plaridel, Bulacan. Contact persons in Metro Manila are Rudy Tayao at 816-2822 and Rodolfo Barredo at 869-6769. In Malolos, Bulacan, call Cris Santiago at (044)791-0703 and Cora Sebastian at (044)791-4111.

Digital photo workshop

IN BUSINESS and school, digital images are processed for Powerpoint presentations, printed proposals and reports, Web pages and e-mail attachments, and, of course, traditional album prints. An evening workshop in Makati fills the need for a convenient, short, uncomplicated hands-on course on digital photography for office workers, housewives, and students. The workshop will be held from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. from May 2 to 6, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 7 at the Comfoods Building corner Gil Puyat and Chino Roces Avenues, Makati. Basic requirements are a digital camera and familiarity with Microsoft Windows operation. The class is organized and taught by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation. For more information, call 813-7420 or 843-5341.

PUYAT STEEL SEALS CONTRACT WITH HK SUN PLAZA

Puyat Steel Corp, the country's sole and exclusive manufacturer of APO Galfan Engineered Roofing System, recently sealed the contract for HK Sun Plaza's HK Home Depot project. In a contract signing held last April 18, HK Sun Plaza executives sealed the contract for supply of roofing materials with Puyat Steel Corp. Covering a roof area of 39,450 square meters, HK Home Depot will utilize Puyat Steel's Standing Seam, a non-punctured roofing profile widely specified by architects and contractors. Present in the contract signing were (1st row, from left): Opie M. Nioko (sales manager, PSC); Salvio D. Perez (VP and general manager, PSC); Wai Man Lun (owner-president, HK Sun Plaza); Andy Bayle (assistant manager, HK Sun Plaza) and Sonny Bayle (member, board of directors, HK Sun Plaza). Second row, from left: Abner Cañezal (sales representative, PSC); Annie Garlitos (sales supervisor, PSC) and Harry Wong (general manager, Multitech Construction & Management Corp)

AFP HONORS PARTNERS, DONORS

The Educational Benefit System Office (Ebso) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) honored its partners, donors and friends at cocktails held recently at the Tejeros Hall at Camp Aguinaldo where organizations supporting the education of the soldiers' orphans and dependents were given appreciation awards each. Meralco Foundation Inc (MFI) is one institution that offered its scholarship program and has graduated 90 scholars from Ebso since 2000. Shown is MFI president Col. Alejandro T. Escaño (left) receiving the award from Gen. Efren Abu, Chief of Staff, AFP; while the Chair of Ebso Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, AFP, watches agreeably.

DY DISTRIBUTES FOGGING MACHINES

Rep. Connie Dy recently facilitated the distribution of fogging machines to all barangays of Pasay City as part of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's project of controlling and preventing dengue fever in the area. The project was successfully held in cooperation with Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad, Barangay 70 Zone 9 Chairman Ronald Langub and Councilors RJ Cabrera and Marlon Pesebre.

Ardi III at 20

ARDI III, the very first commercial complex in the heart of Cainta, is celebrating its 20th Anniversary in May. It was May 5, 1985, when Cainta was amazed when Ardi III was launched with a big bang. A 2-story complex with about 60 stalls ready to serve the people with varied merchandise took the risk of going against the tide. Celebrities like Gary Valenciano, Edu Manzano, (the late) Miguel Rodriguez, Francis Magalona and other showbiz personalities came to celebrate with Caintenos. A series of exciting activities from May 5 to 8 are lined up, including a circus parade featuring circus characters, "Libreng Disco" at the Plaza, free livelihood seminar/workshops, talent search, makeover contest, a party with sponsors and tenants, recognition of outstanding tenants and staff, an impersonation contest, and a 4-day sale on selected items

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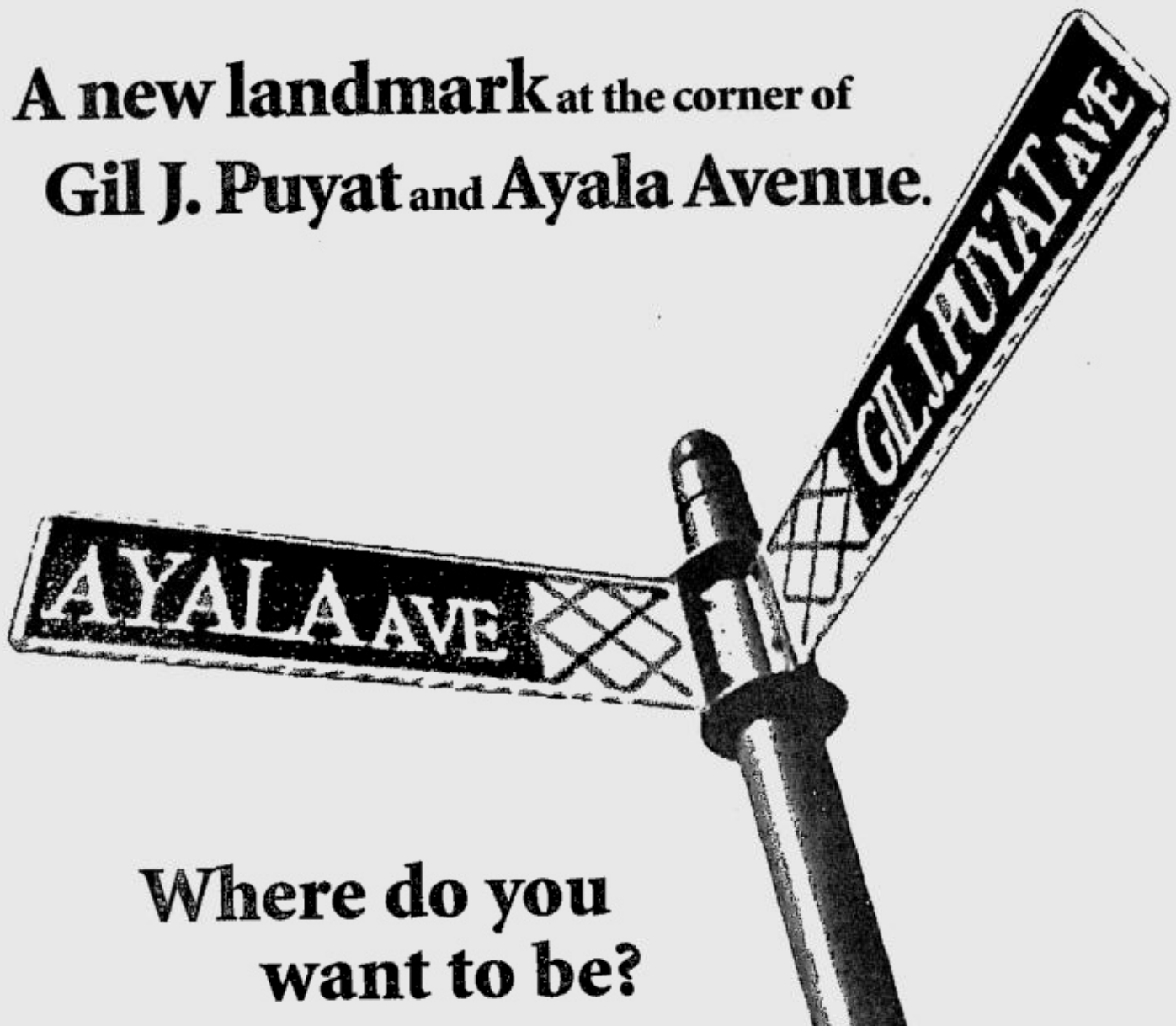

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★★ Mr EARTH SPA ★★ 123B Kamuning rd QC 4102182

★Mr BODY PHYSIQUE ★ 11A Kamias QC 4350978

RELAXING MASSAGE 8978214

RICA REFLEX 09196174327

THAI Msge Lic 0921-7569278

ULTIMUS 0916-8810645 1143-I Del Monte QC 4107326

REFLEXOLOGY

CHRIS or BOBBIE 8548556

I-spa Citiand 9 Mkt 8160151

Jojo HMS 0920-8635511

•Wizard Massage 4213197•

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All arnd Maid Yaya 4377986

Direct Maids,Yaya,Intl Cook 7269060

EXP MAIDS w/ NBI 4398468

Help Agency 5328376 • 5322971

NEED MAIDS 09155544777 / 4325435

Trusted Maids Yaya H-Boy7572089

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOUSEHOLD

HOUSEHOLD JOBS

WE HAVE STAY-IN & PART TIME MAIDS DRVRS, ETC. FOR FIL & FOREIGN CLIENTS # 8967402 0 9 2 0 9 2 3 2 1 8 7

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LIPAT BAHAY

•731-6833•LIPAT

L-BAHAY 9206784 4540520

Cheap 9260424/09272207969

L-BAHAY 8383742/09208449984

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QUEZON CITY

★KATIPUNAN Ext Coml/Resl nr UP Ateneo 204 to 1,200m² P8,500 up/m² 0918-9235216

HOUSE & LOT

MAKATI

4br Mgllanes 0918-9032131

MANDALUYONG

MANDALUYONG NR SHAW BnewTwnhse/3stry-3br/3-4tb/mdsrm/1-2grge P3.655M up 8903461

QUEZON CITY

•Kamias K-i cor K6th• Call 9210265 / 9219967

NEW MLA 3BR 3T&B P16M, 17M & 20M 0917-7499447

New Mla: NEW LA-190 FA-460 5BR 4TB 3CG P16M 711-9051

RUSH SALE Blueridge A 6BR5TB w/pool 600sqm now Very Nice 635-5185

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RIZAL

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1.1M C5 Nr The Fort 10T/mo. or 4Yrs. No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8313226

1.4M Bnew CONDO UNIT 2/4br RFO 0918-4044425

B.New Makati/Mla. Condo Rent /Sale,0920-2403601

MAKATI CONDO FOR SALE 410-8395 / 0919-8504468

P 1.5M 3Br Condo Nr Mktl Drew 0921-6438096; 7401083

Prime Twr 1BR 0921-7985148

RENT 2 OWN 2br P14T RFO 0926-2473987, 0921-5093620

MANILA

BAY GARDEN ROXAS BLVD 1,2,3BR 0920-9602940 RFO

ESPANA TOWER nr UST 699Tup 6873372/0917-8102903

SN ANDRES MANILA Bnew Twnhse /3stry/3br/3-4tb/1-2grge mdsrmP3.850M up 8903461 loc 34

MANDALUYONG

Condo Shaw Blvd assume balance 0917-9015960

CAVITE

MANDALUYONG

One Sapphire 1.2M-3.1M 687-3372 / 0917-8102903

PASIG

Galleria Corp Ctr 107m² FF 4.8M 6873372/0917-8102903

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO Condo 1.5M 9126976

EASTWOOD 3BR 3TB 4M AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY Panoramic View Pool 77m² 0918-4845443

Eastwood City 0917-5213838

Sct Area: NEW LA-157 FA-290 4BR 4TB 4CG P7.5 711-9051

Teachers Vill: NEW LA-60 FA-200 4BR 3TB 2CG P4.4M 711-9051

RIZAL

Primavera Antipolo Thse 75m² 2br Pkg P1.3M 0927-7996726

SAN JUAN

RUSH SALE CONDO UNIT P2.4M w/ 2 Bedrooms, Toilet & Bath at Quadrillon Mansion, M. Paterno St. & N. Domingo, San Juan. Call Reynold CP# 0917-4327579

TAGUIG

Hampston Place 0917-5213836

LOT

PASIG

VV3 Ipil St. 685m² 721-3127

SAN JUAN

Araullo St. 531m² 721-3127

CAVITE

Eagle Ridge Fairway w/golf share 6873372/0917-8102903

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7553 Sycamore St. Marcelo Green Vill 2sty 4BR 4TB maids&drvrs rm w/ T&B 2car grge 09189241992 Nancy

QUEZON CITY

Grnmeadows 3BR 90T 4121825

BULACAN

1BR/TB P5500/mo Sta Maria Lyn M 8909718;09193384431

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

GRNBELT P20T W/PRKG FF/UNF ALSO 1,2,3 BR 0917-851-1193

MAKATI AVE 18T F/F No Dues nice view nr Jupiter 457-8041

PASIG

RIVERSIDE EXECUTIVE TOWNHOMES nr Ever Gotesco Pasig Marife 4213785 / 86 ; 09178356891

QUEZON CITY

2BR Penths Furn 30T Front Ateneo 641-1949 • 641-0511

NICE CONDO: 3BR, 3TB Maids Room w/TB, Secured 913-7267 • 913-7270 -Roy

APARTMENT

MAKATI

STUDIO IN PERLA MANSION 5339225 OR 09178340519

MANILA

1139 CAROLA ST NR UST 8958767

Samp 6459302 - 7841746

MANDALUYONG

PRIVATE COMPOUND STUDIO 5339225 OR 09178340519

QUEZON CITY

2BR U/D 377-E P. Tuazon Proj4 Call 4370294 Mrs Ladia

8th Avenue, Murphy, Cubao 3BR 2TB 15T Call 911-4510

WAREHOUSE/ FACTORY

500sqshp Cubao 7257342 30T

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P3.5M / 25T/MO TEL 8278818

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MAKATI nr BUENDIA PTAMO 120/148/185/M² 1st class 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

Dental Clinic For Sale/Lease Rm224 Atrium Bldg Makati •811-4071/823-6047•

RESORT LEASE/ RENT

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LOAN & MORTGAGE

BUSINESS . DOCTOR 524-3197

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MALATE MLA 526-8048/49

w/Prkg 10T/mo #5487 Boyle Palanan Mktl 8040067 8320270

MAKATI

OFFICE SPACES FOR LEASE (58m²- 627m²) TEL.#887-6003

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

HOUSE & LOT

PARANAQUE

BF=P25-30T/MO=P5M 8278759

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

MITSUBISHI

02 PAJERO Impt 9015295

TOYOTA

97Crla XL 180T 0922-8415528

VOLVO

VOLVO '96 P500,000 A/T 850GLT, BLKSTNE, 813-0188

VAN/PICK-UP

ELF '97 09194645649

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

VAN/PICK-UP

Ford 4X4 Pick-up 2003 assume Bal 09194645649; 09213933431

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1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/76

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/out taking car 5315577

2% w/out taking car 6567685

AUTO FINANCING Any BNew / 2ndHand Cars 20%DP 48mo. 0917-3698636

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
Change of Name

Notice is hereby served to the Public that **SEAEAGLE SHIPS, INC.** has filed with Maritime Industry Authority for a change of Vessel Name from **MV "FLORINDA II" to MV "JUAN LUNA".**
(PDI - April 29, 2005)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Malampaya Development Project will offer the following items for public sale at its Batangas Warehouse located in the Port of Batangas:

- Scrap metal
- Mokveld valve and heat exchanger
- Used office equipments
- Used computer equipments
- Electrical items and offer misc. items

Bidders may receive a complete list of items and bid form. To inspect the items please call Telephone No. (043) 723-0302

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT ELITE PIANO CENTER Almost New:TERMS-7213124

WANTED TO BUY

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MALE

Massuer 18-25yo 09204540607

Production Manager for Wooden Pallet Factory Please call: (02)522-4435/530-1519 /0920-6262141

FEMALE

Hairdreser/Receptionist Crown Jewel @ SM Megamall Female • 0917-8398636

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

•LICENSED PHARMACIST• For posting in Meycauyan drug store Call Celia 09189243037

PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER Fresh Grad. #10 J. Ocampo St., Project 4, QC • 421-2595

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CAREGIVER 3026893

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OFFICE PERSONNEL (0926)6051142 MADEL

SALES REP Salary & Commission 0917-8398865 & 915-1390 to 95

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANTONIO B. ECHEVARRIA, covering properties with titles TCT No. RT-403057 (173106) located in Quezon City, and TCT No. T-9801 located in Tagbilaran, Bohol was extrajudicially settled by the surviving heirs, as recorded in the notarial registry of Atty. Mirasol Dychingco under Doc. No. 186, Page No. 19, Book No. 3, Series of 2005.
(PDI-April 15, 22 & 29, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Wack Wack Golf & Country Club Stock Cert. No. 502 issued to Mercedes S. Tuazon have been lost. If no contest is received new certificate will be issued. (PDI-April 15, 22, 29, 2005)

NOTICE is hereby given that ALORA-SAN REALTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION Stock Certificate Nos. 005; 031; 042; 046 & 050 representing 726 shares issued in the name of MARIA LINA S. VELAYO were lost as per Affidavit of Loss dated Feb. 24, 2005 of Notary Public Atty. Lope M. Velasco of Makati City and entered in his Notarial Registry as Document No. 25, Page No. 06, Book No. 41-A, Series of 2005. (PDI Mar. 4, 18 & April 29 2005)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. ANTHONY
O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited on your word, which you were ever ready to speak for those in trouble or anxiety. Encouraged by this thought, I implore of you to obtain for me (request). The answer to my prayer may require a miracle, even so, you are the Saint of Miracles. O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the Sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. (Thank you very much for the graces.)

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PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR NEGOTIATION

Asset Disposition Program

The Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC) is informing the public that on April 14, 2005, the Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) declared a Failure of Bidding for the development and privatization of the 65.5 hectares Tourism Complex and 40-hectare Airport Area covering an approximate area of one hundred five and a half (105.5) hectares. The reason for the Failure of Bidding is that there is only one (1) proponent and only International Thunderbird Gaming Corporation has been pre-qualified to participate in the bidding and negotiation process pursuant to SBAC rules and regulations.

In view of the foregoing, we are now inviting Interested Proponents to participate in the negotiations for the development and privatization of the 65.5 hectares Tourism Complex and 40-hectare Airport Area covering an approximate area of one hundred five and a half (105.5) hectares.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the negotiations which outline the requirements for pre-qualification and submission of proposals, among others, are available to interested proponents at the PPMC Office at Pennsylvania Avenue, Poro Point, San Fernando City, La Union on May 2, 2005 up to May 13, 2005 from Mondays thru Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is PhP 20,000.00 payable to PPMC in Cash or Manager's Check.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest, the documentary requirements, and their proposals on or before May 20, 2005 until 3:00 p.m.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
SBAC COMMITTEE
Poro Point Management Corporation
Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone
Pennsylvania Avenue, Poro, San Fernando City
La Union

or they can contact Ms. Josefa Catherine T. Bada at telephone numbers (072) 242-4016 or (072) 888-5956 or send e-mail at ppmc@sflu.com.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT
Chairman
SBAC Committee

(PDI – April 29, May 2 & 10, 2005)

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-PSD-2005-07

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-PSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

SCHEDULE	ITEM/DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 24, 2005; 9:00 AM			
7A1	HYDROCHLORIC ACID, HCL	2BCF-05-190 (ZC)	P 3,440,000.00
7A2	PARTS FOR PIELSTICK 16PC2.5 V 400 DIESEL ENGINE, MFR: SEMT PIELSTICK	5PDP-05-087 (NY)	P 9,739,200.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 24, 2005; 2:00 PM			
7B1	SODIUM HYDROXIDE (CAUSTIC SODA) FOR TIWI GPP	3TGP-05-016 (ZC)	P 1,442,000.00
7B2	SODIUM HYDROXIDE (CAUSTIC SODA) FOR MAKBAN GPP	3MGP-05-043 (ZC)	P 9,600,000.00
7B3	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATLS, TOOLS, EQUIPT, CONSUMABLES & SUPERVISION IN THE REPLACEMENT OF DETERIORATED STEAM PIPING INSTALLATION MATLS OF PLANT A, B & C (PB2)	3TPM-04-032 (RP)	P 3,000,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 25, 2005; 9:00 AM			
7C1	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATLS. FOR THE ASSISTED NATURAL REGENERATION (ANR.) AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS AT BENGUET (PB2)	UAR-05-010 (ZC)	P 1,714,505.48
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 25, 2005; 2:00 PM			
7D1	TREATED LUMBER, T&G & PLYWOOD FOR PARTIAL REHAB OF PGPP-1 (PB2)	5PGP-04-158 (LS)	P 3,337,099.00
7D2	J.O.-SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TEST & COMMISSIONING OF TWO (2) BANKS STATIONARY SINGLE CELL INDUSTRIAL TYPE BATTERIES (PB2)	5PGP-05-077 (LS)	P 5,000,000.00
7D3	J.O.-CASTING/FABRICATION OF TWO (2) SETS BEARING CASE (2 PCS UPPER & 2 PCS LOWER)	5LGP-05-104 (LS)	P 1,400,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 26, 2005; 9:00 AM			
7E1	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATLS FOR THE RETROFITTING OF STATIC EXCITATION OF AUXILIARY UNIT 1 & 2 GENERATOR	1ANG-04-362 (JP)	P 20,000,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: MAY 26, 2005; 2:00 PM			
7F1	J.O.-SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATLS & EQUIPT. FOR THE COMPLETE INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING OF JIB CRANE, 5 TONS CAPACITY & 4.0M OVERHAUL HEIGHT (MINIMUM)	1MCF-04-702 (JP)	P 1,500,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held at the Bidding Room for the following bidding schedules on:

7A1-7A2	May 10, 2005; 9:00 AM	7E1	May 12, 2005; 9:00 AM
7B1-7B3	May 10, 2005; 2:00 PM	7F1	May 12, 2005; 2:00 PM
7D1-7D3	May 11, 2005; 2:00 PM		

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Services Division, Materials Management Dept. of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee per schedule as indicated below starting on May 5, 2005. Issuance of eligibility and bid documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM up to the specified time as stated in the bid schedules above. No bid documents will be issued three (3) calendar days before the date of bidding.

PRICE OF BID DOCUMENTS PER SCHEDULE			
7B1/7C1/7D3/7F1	P 500.00	7A2/7B2	P 2,000.00
7A1/7B3/7D1/7D2	P 1,000.00	7E1	P 4,000.00

Bid will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, PSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by other NPC Offices will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid. Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of "Republic Act 9184"

The bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, irrevocable Letter of Credit- One Percent (1%), Surety Bond- Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand with 120 days validity period from the date of opening of bids issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

CHAIRMAN
Bids and Awards Committee
PSD-NPC

(PDI - April 29, 2005)

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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(Head Office)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors with current Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for eligibility and to bid and if later found eligible to bid for the project described below:

Project Title : **Proposed Indoor Firing Range at the BSP Main Complex**
Scope of Work : Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services and performing all operations necessary for the completion of the proposed construction of 2-storey firing range building all in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.
Project Location : A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo St., Manila
Approved Budget : Forty Six Million Pesos (P46,000,000.00)
Source of Funding : Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Contract Duration : One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)
- PCAB License : Registration Particulars of at least "Medium A" (Building and Industrial Plant)
- Contractor's Construction Experience : Should have completed within the last five (5) years (2000 to present) at least three (3) projects involving construction of indoor firing range or new construction and/or general office renovation works involving civil, plumbing, finishing, electrical and HVAC works or similar projects one of which costs not less than Twenty Three Million Pesos (P23,000,000.00)
- Certification of Satisfactory Performance : Should be able to submit affidavit of satisfactory performance from the client of the declared completed similar projects
- Net Financial Contracting Capacity : At least Forty Six Million Pesos (P46,000,000.00) computed as 10 x (current asset less current liabilities) minus (value of all on-going contracts including awarded yet to be started)
- Credit Line or Cash Deposit Certificate : At least Four Million Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (P4,600,000.00)

Eligibility Statement Forms
- Cost of Forms : Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
- Date of Issuance : April 25 to May 02, 2005 / 9:00 A.M. to 12 NN
- Deadline of Submission : May 06, 2005 / 4:30 P.M.

Notice of Eligibility / Ineligibility
- Date of Issuance : May 26, 2005 / 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Bid / Tender Documents
- Issuance : Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00)
- Date of Issuance : May 27 to 30, 2005 / 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 NN

Pre-Bid Conference
- Date and Time : June 03, 2005 / 10:00 AM
- Venue : MR2A, 2nd Floor, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo St., Manila

Submission and Opening of Bids
- Deadline of Submission : June 29, 2005 / 10:00 AM

For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat – telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143.

The venue for the issuance and submission of accomplished eligibility statements and bid documents is at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor – Five Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo St., Manila, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 nn and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m

The schedule for issuance of notice of eligibility/ineligibility up to the deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations shall govern relative to the bidding and award of contract including its implementation.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bids is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI–April 22 & 29, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce to all interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction of 200,000 MT or 4.0-Million bags 5% and 15% brokens Imported Rice 2005 Arrivals.

PARTICULARS	VOLUME (IN MT)	INDICATIVE PRICE	5% BROKENS	15% BROKENS
Farmer's Organizations	40,000	Ex-vessel	P1,026.00	P 970.00/bag
Retailers	40,000	Ex-warehouse	P1,076.00	P 1,010.00/bag
Open to all interested buyers	120,000			

The pre-auction conference and auction proper shall be held at 10:00 AM at FDC Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila on the following dates or until the whole volume for auction has been sold/exhausted:

Pre-Auction Conference: May 2, 2005
Auction Proper: May 6, 2005

All interested bidders/buyers are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling)
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Metro Manila

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting May 3, 2005 at DMO OCD, 5th floor National Food Authority, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Q.C. from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For any inquiries, please contact Esperanza Tecson tel. nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

Bid documents will be available on May 3, 2005 to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000 for FO's/Retailers and P5,000.00 for all interested buyers.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) CONRADO DL. IBANEZ
Assistant Administrator and
Chairman, Disposition

(PDI – April 27 & 29, 2005)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Maynila, Pilipinas

BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) invites Consultants to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the Construction Management Consultancy Services for the following proposed projects. The bid packages with the corresponding Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) are as follows:

	Project Name	ABC
1.0	Proposed BSP Branch Buildings in Legazpi and Naga	P 4.42M
2.0	Proposed BSP Branch Building in Tuguegarao	P 2.96M

The scope of Construction Management work includes among others quantity surveying services, preparation of detailed estimates, value engineering, full construction management and supervision for the proposed BSP branch buildings as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The Minimum eligibility requirements are as follows:

1.0 The firm must have been in operation for the last fifteen (15) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) engaging in the lawful practice of the type of consulting services called for in this Invitation.
2.0 The firm must have rendered within the last ten (10) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) Construction Management consultancy services for at least five (5) completed new construction projects of similar nature/magnitude/complexity as the proposed BSP projects and must be able to submit a certification of satisfactory performance for the client for at least three (3) of the required five (5) projects
3.0 The principal or Managing Officer must be a Registered Architect or Engineer with at least fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work and construction management.
4.0 The Project Manager for the projects must be a registered Architect or Civil Engineer with minimum fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work five (5) years of which experience in construction management.
5.0 The Resident Construction Management Team should at least be Registered Architects/Engineers with a minimum ten (10) years combined design/construction management and construction experience where the Construction Management experience should at least be five (5) years. The minimum number required for the team should at least be three.
6.0 The firm (partnership/corporation/joint venture) must be at least 60% owned by a Filipino citizen
7.0 In case of a joint venture, a valid joint venture agreement shall be required. The joint venture must have rendered construction management consultancy services for at least two (2) completed projects of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP project.

The quality-cost based evaluation procedure stipulated in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA No. 9184 shall be adopted for this consultancy service requirement.

Eligibility documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat on 25 April to 02 May 2005 for a non-refundable fee of P200.00, Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Streets, Manila and must be submitted duly accomplished to the same office not later than 4:30 p.m. on 06 May 2005.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract shall apply.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive defect or any formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any consultant/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate/indemnify the consultant for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, Jr.
Chairman

(PDI – April 22 & 29, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
SALE OF ASSETS

The assets are being offered on an "as-is, where-is" basis, at the Indicative Prices presented below, Sealed bids/offers shall be received at 3:00 p.m. on the following schedules at PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

1. PUBLIC BIDDING

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (In Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Radio Philippine Network (RPN) Various machinery and equipment, furniture and office equipment located at Broadcast City, Diliman, Quezon City	P106,714.00	May 10, 2005

2. OFFER FOR SALE

Asset Name/ Location	Indicative Price (In Philippine Currency)	Date of Submission of Offers
Atlas Development and Steel Industries, Inc. Land, buildings and improvements located at Jenny's Avenue, Rosario, Pasig City	P26,945,000.00	May 12, 2005
Davao Timber Corp. Land (11,948 sq.m.) and all improvements thereon located along Binuangan, Maco, Compostela Valley Province	P1,549,000.00	May 17, 2005

Interested parties may secure the sale documents from the PMO Marketing Dept. at non-refundable fees of P300.00 for RPN, P500.00 for Atlas and P500.00 for Davao Timber.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department.

For more information, please contact the PMO Marketing Dept. at telephone nos. 817-6331; 817-8762; 818-4733; 892-21-45 fax no. 818-0906.

(PDI–April 27, 28 & 29, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region XII - Tacurong City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(FOR THE SUPPLY OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2005)

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) Region XII, Tacurong City invites Security Agencies duly registered with Philippine National Police – Security Agencies and Guards Supervision Division (PNP-SAGSD) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible to bid for the contract of:

PROJECT/ CONTRACT	SITE	BUDGET APPROVED	NO. OF GUARDS
1. Security Service Contract	Kidapawan City and Cotabato Province	P 4,259,574.00	30
2. Security Service Contract	Tacurong City and Sultan Kudarat Province	P 1,703,829.60	12
3. Security Service Contract	Southern Philippines Grains Complex (SPGC) Tacurong City	P 3,123,687.50	22

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME
Issuance of Bid/Tender Documents	April 26 - May 10, 2005	(8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)
Pre-Bidding Conference	May 10, 2005	(9:30 AM)
Submission of Bid/Tender Documents	May 31, 2005	(8:30 AM - 9:30 AM)
Opening of Bids/Tender Documents and Bid Proposal	May 31, 2005	(9:35 AM)

The VENUE of all activities stated above will be the Farmer's Training Center, NFA-SPGC Compound, Tacurong City.

Security Agencies may secure APPLICATION FOR ELIGIBILITY FORMS AND BID/TENDER DOCUMENTS from the Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) Secretariat upon submission of a Letter of Intent and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Php 5,000.00.

BID PROPOSAL FORMS may be available to Security Agencies at the RBAC Secretariat upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Php 2,000.00 per project/contract. Security Agencies have the option to bid for any or all of the projects stated above provided that the amount of Largest Single Security Services Contract Completed for the past three (3) years is at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the contract to be bidded, adjusted to the current price.

The Source of Funds for these projects is under the General Appropriation Funds of the Philippine Government.

The criteria in determining the eligibility of the Security Agency is the pass/fail criteria as stated in the Preliminary Examination of bids in R.A. 9184 subject to post qualification. The Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid Method will be used in the evaluation of bid.

The RBAC Secretariat can be contacted at Tel. No. (064) 200-3803 / 384-1247, Fax No. (064) 200-3807. Contact persons are: Ms. Ma. Cristina O. Piena/Mr. Leonardo R. Robles, Jr.

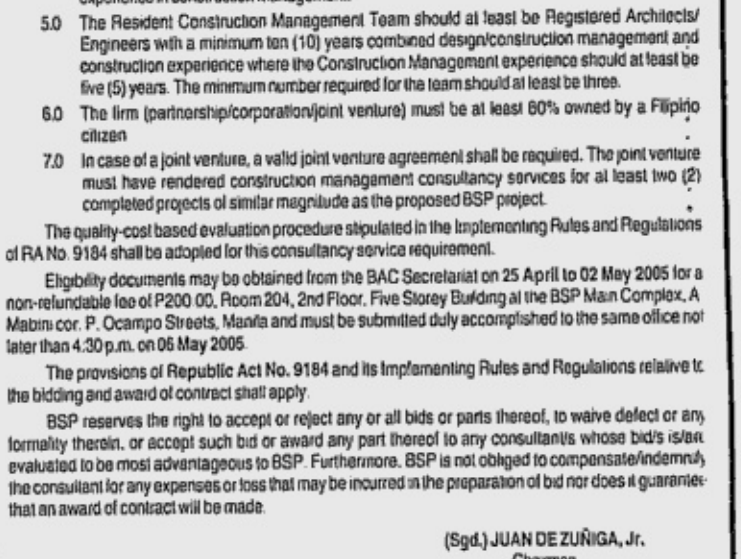
The NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any and or all bids thereof, waive any formalities found therein or to accept or reject any or to award to any contractor whose bids is considered most advantageous to the NFA and/or the government.

(Sgd.) EDGAR S. BENTULAN
Regional Manager

(PDI - April 22 & 29, 2005)

JESUS, LORD OF THE DIVINE MERCY PARISH
in association with
LAKBAY DASAL TRAVEL & TOURS, INC.
presents

TRUE CONFESSIONS
(All For The Divine Mercy)



SIX PRIESTS IN THE CITY
with special participation of:
MR. COCOY LAUREL
MS. JOY ISABEL

ALIW THEATER, STAR CITY,
ROXAS BLVD., PASAY CITY
APRIL 30, 2005, 7:30 P.M.

Manila Memorial Park
Leading the Way
SUCAT, Parañaque
HOLY CROSS, Novaliches
DASMARIÑAS, Cavite
BULACAN-Plaridel
CEBU-Liloan
DAVAO-Ma-a
(632) 815 1875 or 90
(632) 893 8374 to 77

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK FORT BONIFACIO
Mortuary ... Crematory
The newest and most modern Funeral Home & Crematory in the country!
Trunk Line: (632) 845-2334 to 38
Direct Line: (632) 845-2440

Eutiquio Valderrama Villafuerte

April 15, 1922 – April 23, 2005

He is survived by his wife, **Julieta**; children **Ton** and **Daise**, **George** and **Vicky**, **Glen** and **Nonong**, and **Norge** and **Deo**; and grandchildren, **Dindin**, **Trisha**, **Rod**, **Victor** and **Allan**, and **Emir** and **Azianne**.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in 3845 Pinos St., Brgy. Pinagkaisahan, Makati City. Interment will be on Saturday, April 30, 2005 at The Heritage Park after the 1:30 p.m. Mass at the Pinagkaisahan Chapel.

His family, relatives and officemates at the Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp. request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Philippine National Red Cross

Board of Governors, Staff and Volunteers
announce with deep sorrow
the untimely demise of

RAYMUNDO S. PUNONGBAYAN

Member, Board of Governors

who died in line of duty as Red Cross Volunteer on April 28, 2005 at the age of 68.

His loving children, **Lulu P. Jaleco**, **Stauro**, **Ramon Enrico** and **Andalus Julie**; granddaughter **Beatrice Louisa P. Jaleco**; and the PNRC request everyone to join in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

Memorial services will be announced later.

LUIS R. SANCHEZ

Peacefully joined our Lord on April 27, 2005 at the age of 74.

He will be truly missed and always be remembered by his bereaved wife, **Estrella** and children **Caesar Luis** and **Arlene Anne**, **Raphael**, **Raul** and **Elizabeth**, **Socielo**, **Estrella Sebe** and **Arnold**, **Errol Antonio** and **Giselle**, **Charles Joseph** and **Olive**, **Eugene** and **Carmen**, **Leizel** and **Carlo**; grandchildren, sisters and brothers-in-law, nephews and nieces.

His remains lie in state at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 1, 2005 after the 1:00 PM Mass at the Eternal Gardens, Novaliches, Quezon City.

CLARISA DIMALANTA Y GARCIA

Former Head Librarian at the U.P. College of Medicine

Joined our Lord on April 26, 2005 at the age of 86.

Her body lies in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, Magallanes, Makati. Interment will be tomorrow, April 30, 2005 at Manila Memorial Park, Paranaque after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish.

In Loving Memory
on the Fourth Death Anniversary of

VIRGINIA C. SY GRAPILON

(January 03, 1949 – April 29, 2001)
of
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro;
Pawikan, Cabucgayan, Biliran;
Carigara, Leyte

Her surviving spouse, jag; children **René** and **Miranda** (nee de Quiroz) and **Raúl**; parents **Santos** (†) and **Esperanza Sy**; parents-in-law **Ex-Mayor Herculano** (†) and **Rosario** (†) **Aguila Grapilon**; sisters **Mely** and **Dr. Ely** and brother-in-law **Engr. Omar Costibolo**, brother **Engr. Danny**; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law **Atty. Jun** and **Baby Lagunzad**, **Atty. Fe Aguila Grapilon** (†), **Engr. Jess** (†) and **Paz Sabay**, **Leo** (†) and **Atty. Fidelyn Grapilon**; her relatives request her friends and those who loved her and became part of her life to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

ENGR. ANTONIO C. SAQUETON

Retired Provincial Engineer of Cavite

Peacefully joined his Creator on April 27 at the age of 81.

His loving wife **Milagros Sison**; children **Grace** and **Ruel**, **Arvin** and **Maricris**; grandchildren **Roy**, **Ralph** and **Angelo**; brothers and sisters and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at Saqueton's residence at Kawit, Cavite.

Interment will be on May 3, 2005 at Gregoria Memorial Cemetery.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

RAYMUNDO AFRICA BRIONES

who peacefully joined our Creator on March 20, 2005

wish to express our deepest gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who in various ways have condoled and comforted us during our time of bereavement.
You have meaningfully lightened our burden and eased our grief.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

METRO MANILA

•LAS PIÑAS
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas; Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024

•MAKATI
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City; Tel. 894-5832 to 34
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
865 J.P. Rizal St., Poblacion, Makati City; Tels. 890-3556; 899-8191
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City; Tels. 895-1011 to 19
MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City; Tel. 890-63-18
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284

•MALABON
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila; Tels. 2812963, 2813034, 2810522

•MANDALUYONG
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City
Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044

•MANILA
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manugul, Manila
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila; Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795; 732-2827
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
2141 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila; Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila; Tels. 749-3579, 781-1772
UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila; Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tel. 302-5447

•MARIKINA
ERIC SANTIAGO MEMORIAL CHAPELS
26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City; Tels. 942-6044; 475-1177
F. SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
9 V. Gomez & 13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City; Tels. 646-1725 or 646-1730
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City; Tels. 941-3196 to 98, 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City; Tels. 646-1725, 646-1730

•PARAÑAQUE
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Rd., Sucat, Parañaque City; Tels. 825-1296; 825-1291, Telefax: 825-1314
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque; Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635
LINCOLN MEMORIAL SERVICES, INC.
Ground Floor, JEMP Bldg., J. Cabarrus cor. Monserrat Sts., Phase I, BF Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220

•PASAY
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
436 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836

•PASIG
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599, 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City; Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735

•QUEZON CITY
ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City; Tels. 715-1025, 715-1031, 715-1027
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kalraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3606 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87

•TAGUIG-PATEROS
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-3010, 633-3602
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila, Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42; (TL) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 110/112

PROVINCIAL

•ALBAY
LIGÑON HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
Bugtong Road, Legaspi City; Tels. (052) 820-0186; 0917-2074152

•BACOLOD
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St., Mandalagan, Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132

•BAGUIO
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117

•BATAAN
SANTUARIO GARDEN & CHAPELS
Talisay Road, Balanga City, Bataan
Tels. (047) 2370643 • 7911766

•BULACAN
FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011; Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603

•CAVITE
FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675
LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite; Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978

•CEBU
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City; Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu; Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601

•DAVAO
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City; Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258

•ILOCOS
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur; Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5680136; (0917) 5680145

•LAGUNA
SAN RAMON FUNERAL HOMES
2020 Brgy. Dita, Sta. Rosa, Laguna Tels. (049) 837-5052; 531-4142; Fax (049) 531-4989
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064
ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna Tels. (049) 562-1668; 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

•PAMPANGA
FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City Tels. (045) 888-2959; (045) 322-5247

•RIZAL
OUR LADY OF PEACE MEMORIAL PARK CHAPEL & SERVICES, INC.
No. 6 Cangma St., Antipolo City 1870
Tel. No. 697-0782; 697-0026; 650-7426; Fax: 697-2764
F. SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
Gulnang Bayan, San Mateo, Rizal; Tels. 649-5949; 942-4460
HOLY GARDENS MEMORIAL PARK
Third Level, Unishoppe Complex, Quezon Ave., Angono, Rizal
Tels. 651-1711; 651-0737
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855

•ZAMBALES
DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
#42 Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City
Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 811-1086, (047) 222-4512, (047) 224-2014
OLONGAPO MEMORIAL PARK
Del Rosario St., Tabacuhan, Sta. Rita, Olongapo
Tel. No. (047) 223-1692

BUSINESS

11 PRIORITY AREAS

Malacañang approves 2005 investment plan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG last Tuesday approved the 2005 Investment Priorities Plan, which puts priority on export-oriented businesses in 11 investment areas identified in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez, who is also managing head of the Board of Investments, said the new IPP was more focused and aligned with the MTPDP 2004-2010.

The 11 priority investment areas include agri-business; healthcare and wellness products and services; information and communications technology; electronics; motor vehicle products; energy; infrastructure; tourism; shipbuilding/shipping; jewelry; and fashion garments.

Aside from these preferred activities, other areas were included in the IPP as required under existing laws.

Covered by mandatory inclusion were industrial tree plantations; iron and steel projects; exploration, mining, quarrying and processing of minerals; publication or printing of books or textbooks; and refining, storage, marketing and distribution of petroleum products.

The IPP also covered ecological solid waste management; provision of clean water; those covered in bilateral agreements; and those involving the rehabilitation, self-development and self-reliance of disabled persons.

Full incentives under the IPP include tax holidays, duty-free importation of capital goods and other fiscal and non-fiscal perks.

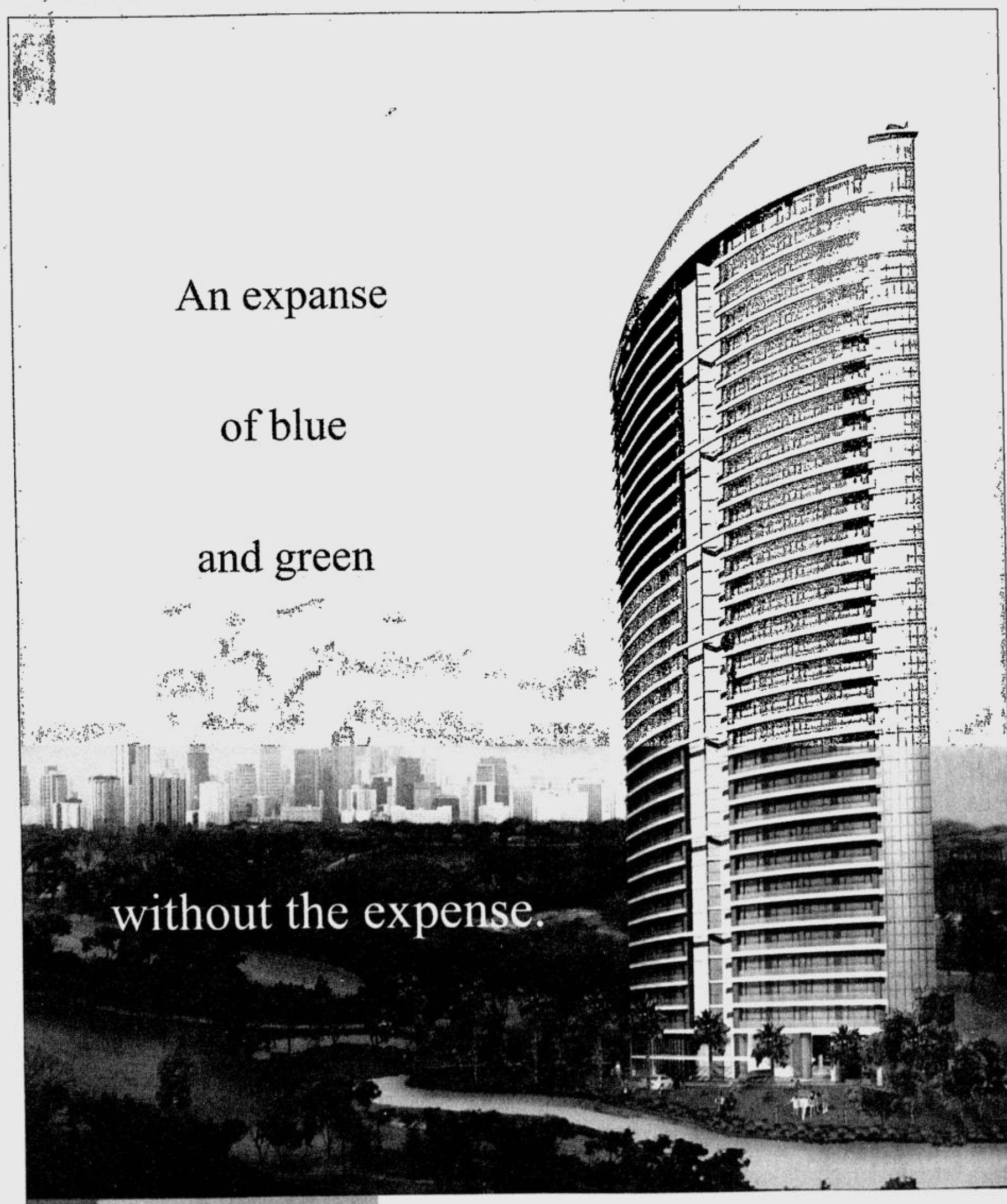
Hernandez said that under the 2005 IPP, export-oriented business were no longer automatically qualified for full incentives. Rather, they must be engaged in any of the 11 priority investment areas.

However, businesses in other export activities may qualify for limited incentives if at least half of the total output were geared for export.

Also qualified for limited incentives were investments meant to support businesses involved in the 11 preferred areas and mandatory inclusions—called industry clusters—and modernization activities in all covered investment areas.

The 2005 IPP, however, still does not allow income tax holidays for qualified projects with sovereign guarantees and/or guaranteed rate or return.

Hernandez said the descriptions and coverage, and the entitlement to incentives of the listed activities would be defined and clarified in the general policies and guidelines that the BOI would issue.



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DOF supports rate hike, VAT on electricity

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has insisted that increasing power rates and imposing value-added tax (VAT) on electricity were necessary to solve the country's fiscal problems.

Finance Assistant Secretary Gil Beltran explained that raising power rates was needed to ease, if not totally stop, the financial bleeding of state-run National Power Corp.

Imposing VAT on electricity, on the other hand, was a measure intended to plug loopholes in the VAT system and raise more revenues for the cash-strapped government.

Beltran made the explanation amid criticisms from some members of Congress that raising the power rate and imposing VAT on electricity were anti-poor.

"If we don't do it (raise power rates), losses of Napocor will continue. In the country's history, power corporations have never lost that much," said Beltran.

He noted that Napocor's losses last year hit around P100 billion.

Aside from alleged mismanagement, Napocor's losses were also blamed on its insufficient capitalization that forced it to depend heavily on loans to put up power plants.

Beltran said the recent increases in the generation rates of Napocor should have been done long ago to prevent losses from reaching the current level.

The Energy Regulatory Commission this month granted an average 5-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour increase in the generation rates of Napocor, on top of the 98-centavo hike granted last year.

Beltran reiterated that imposing VAT on electricity was needed to help raise P60 billion in additional revenues from the VAT reform plan.

Furniture group calls for lifting of timber tariff

A GROUP of local furniture makers yesterday called on government to scrap the tariff on imported timber as the industry continues to reel from escalating costs due to the scarcity of local wood.

Nicolaas de Lange, chair of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, said in a press briefing that removing the 7-percent duty on imported processed wood products would help ensure a steady supply of wood over the long term.

"This may be so, considering that it is taking the Department of Environment and Natural Resources too long to verify whether those who have been allowed to harvest logs commercially are following the terms of their timber license agreements," De Lange said.

He said the total log ban, which was enforced after the destructive flash floods that hit the country last December and lifted on March 7, "continues de facto" until the DENR has determined if the permit holders should resume harvesting.

De Lange cited the ban and the DENR's slow action as the main reasons behind the disruption in the wood supply chain which, in turn, pushed up prices of local and imported wood.

CFIP data show that prices of commonly used wood products like tanguile have risen to P59 per board foot from P48; plywood to P350 from P225; and gmelina to P32 from P13.

De Lange said the duty on imported lumber was on top of a 10-percent tax and other fees required for various permits.

"Allowing a duty-free importation of lumber wood also gives local manufacturers a level playing field since imported furniture are slapped less duties and taxes compared to raw lumber," he added.

The CFIP chair said the disruption in the supply of wood should be addressed to save companies from closure and shutdown, and save workers from layoffs and downsizing.

Ronnel W. Domingo

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BUSINESS Friday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

How to make consumers buy at first sight

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

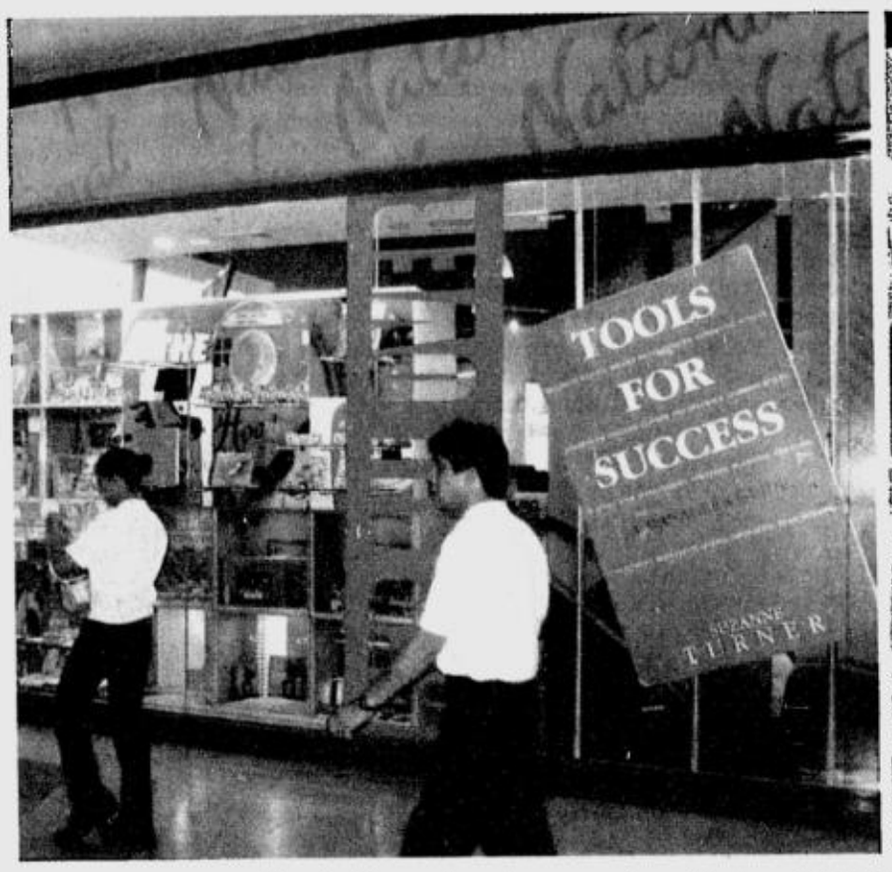
BUY at first sight.

This is the instinctive reaction that retailers want to solicit from their customers, which explains the time, effort and expenses put in coming up with just the right look and atmosphere for their shops.

Given the plethora of choices in the marketplace, forward-thinking retailers know it is not enough to just come up with the best product or service at the most affordable price. They must also invest in the right store design, signages, display and unique architectural details to lure customers into their store and, hopefully, make them spend.

In the cutthroat retailing industry, it pays to stand out.

Business Friday features three local companies that know the importance of updating investing in their store's look to help them stay on top of their game.



WINDOW displays and interior layouts have become a science that can prompt a sale.

National Bookstore

The iconic National Bookstore has been around for more than 60 years, but the stores that most Filipinos go to for their books and school supplies do not look their age.

Over the years, National Bookstore has gone through several logo and store design and display changes to keep up with the times. The original red letters on white background have been reversed, with the red now the dominant color to represent good luck.

Such changes are not about to stop, according to National Bookstore's vice president Cecile Ramos-Lichauco, as National Bookstore intends to remain dynamic and abreast of changes in customer preferences.

Lichauco tells Business Friday Filipinos tend to be attracted by visuals. Big ones. Thus, National invested in larger than life signs of the latest books and authors to attract the buying public. These changes go hand in hand with the changes in window displays.

Lichauco says the way the books are arranged definitely influences buying behavior. Some who have no plans of buying actually end up spending because they found a book they wanted on the window displays.

Popular books and bestsellers are displayed prominently in center tables to encourage purchases. Books and literature along a central theme, such as self-help or business, are also displayed together to target specific readers.

And because books account for just about 40 percent of National Bookstore's sales, focus is also placed on the proper display of the Hallmark cards and the popular scrapbooking materials, and the school supplies.

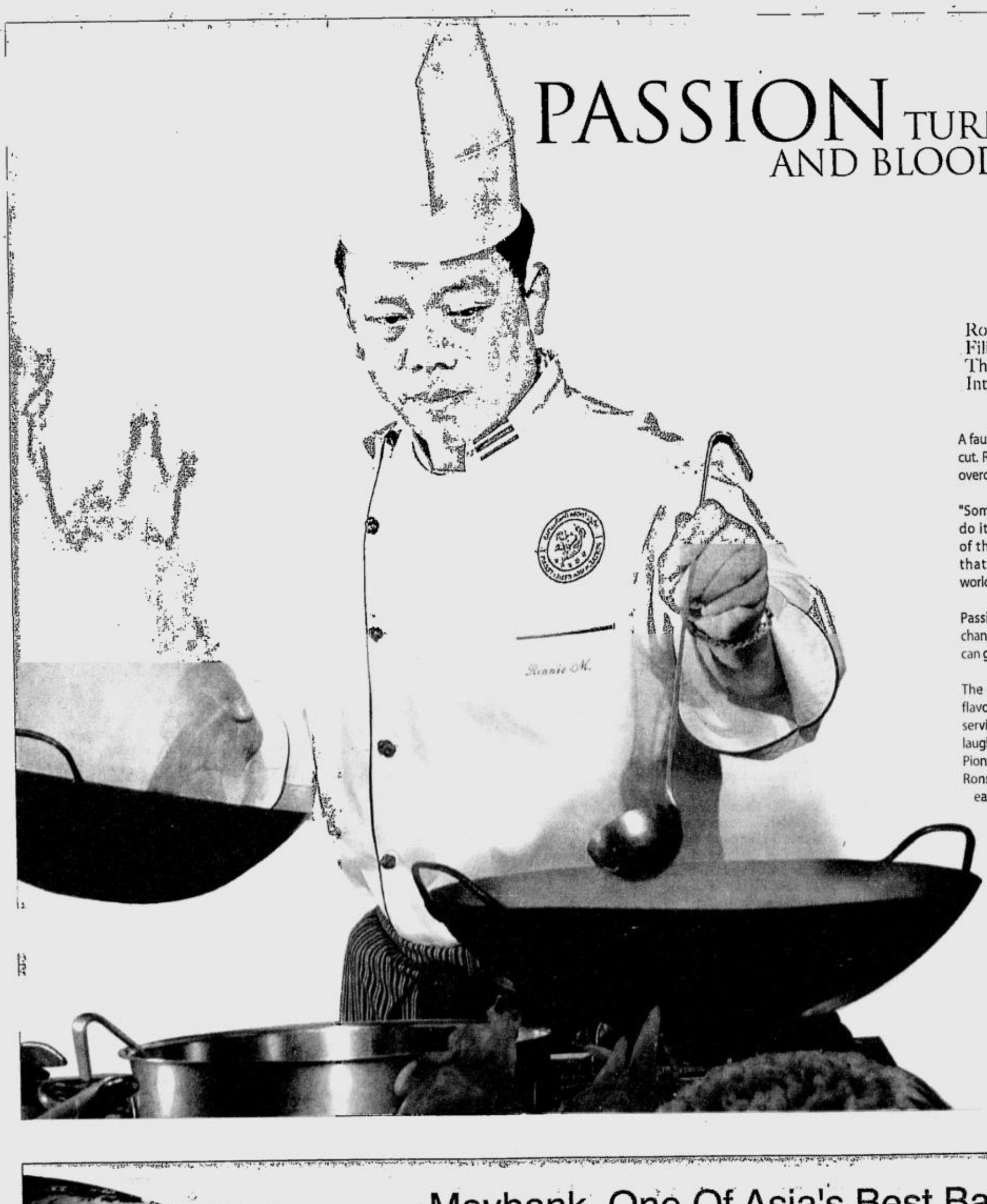
"If we do not change the displays or our designs, we will look very static, and very old. We don't want that. That is why we always come up with something new to look dynamic," she says.

The latest design concept at the Market!Market! outlet near Makati City, for instance, features mostly books in the window display. Big graphic designs are displayed along the walls that aim to attract the younger set.

"In the future, we will be look-

HOW TO MAKE/ B2-2

PASSION TURNS FIRE, STEEL AND BLOOD INTO GOLD.



Ronnie Macuja
Filipino, Chef
Three-time gold medalist,
International Salon Culinaire, Thailand

A faulty gas tank. A finger bleeding from a deep knife cut. Racial bias. Just three of the things Ronnie Macuja's overcome to get to where he is today.

"Some people will look at you and think you can't do it. But I said to myself: One day I will be one of them." His casual manner masks the drive that propelled him to executive chef – the culinary world's version of a CEO – before he even turned 40.

Passion often brings risk. "I've moved countries, changed jobs to meet my goals. In the kitchen, anything can go wrong. So in other aspects, I keep things simple."

The chef was impressed by Pioneer's own blend of flavors: straight talk, warmed with truly personalized service. "Some companies won't even insure chefs," he laughs. Yet sharing his passion for overcoming obstacles, Pioneer created custom coverage to cover not just Chef Ronnie, but his career: a dollar product to shield his earnings, insurance for his precious personal set of knives, even an incentive that rewards him for future gold medals.

"It's that thorough, yet that simple. That's why with Pioneer, I get it," beams Chef Ronnie.

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DST on special savings deposits

By Jose A. Osana
and Herminigildo G. Murakami
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

SPECIAL savings deposit accounts are buzzwords these days. This bank deposit, called special because it offers higher rates of interest than ordinary savings deposit, has been in the vortex of a raging controversy between the banks and the tax authorities, on the issue of whether these deposits are subject to documentary stamp tax (DST) under then Section 180 of the Tax Code or not.

At present, many cases involving millions of pesos of deficiency DST assessments on special savings deposits are pending before the Court of Tax Appeals.

The banks claim that special savings deposits are not covered by then Section 180 of the Tax Code, which taxed "certificates of deposits drawing interest." The banks argue that the special savings deposits are not in the category of time deposits based on the guidelines set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas because the deposits do not have a term or maturity period, are withdrawable anytime upon demand, and are evidenced by a passbook just like ordinary savings deposits.

On the other hand, the tax authorities, in a decision denying the letter-protest of a bank contesting the DST assessment on special savings deposit, contend that the special savings deposits and time deposits are one and the same banking transaction.

According to the tax authorities: "To evade payment of the DST, efforts were made by banks to place a superficial distinction between the two deposit accounts by introducing an innovation using a regular passbook to document the special savings deposit account and by claiming that the said special savings deposit account has no specific maturity date.

"At first glance, the innovative scheme may have accomplished in putting a semblance of difference between the two accounts, but an analytical look at the passbook issued clearly reveals that although it does not have the form of a certificate labeled as such, it has a specific maturity and earns a premium interest rate. Thus, for all intents and purposes, it has the same nature and substance as a 'certificate of deposit bearing interest.'

"Therefore, we hold that the passbook is in itself a certificate of deposit."

The issue seems to be inevitably headed to the Supreme Court.

However, even before the taxability of special savings deposits under then Section 180 of the Tax Code is resolved, Congress, through Republic Act (RA) No. 9243, renumbered then Section 180 of the Tax Code as Section 179, and amended it to include "certificates or other evidences of deposits that are either drawing interest significantly higher than the regular savings deposit taking into consideration the size of the deposit and the risks involved or drawing interest and having a specific maturity date," among the debt instruments subject to DST.

Revenue Regulations (RR) No. 13-2004 dated Dec. 23, 2004, which implements RA 9243, clarifies that: "As is the treatment prevailing before the effectivity of RA 9243, all certificates or other evidences of deposit in banks drawing interest at such rate depending upon the amount deposited and having a specific maturity date or where the interest earned varies depending on the duration/term (number of days) of the deposit, shall be subject to the DST provided herein, irrespective of the nomenclature and whether covered by a certificate, passbook or any other evidence of deposit.

"Bank deposits of any kind which provide interest higher than the rate given to a regular savings/demand deposit account shall also be subject to the new rate of DST imposed herein. The exceptions are ordinary demand and savings deposits which are withdrawable upon demand by the depositor and earning rates of interest based on prevailing market rates for a regular savings/demand deposit account, irrespective of the amount deposited. The DST shall be due and payable upon the date such deposit is made."

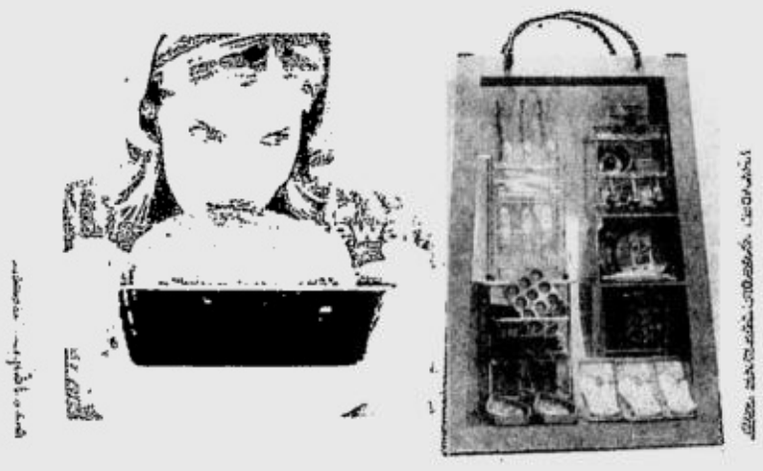
Under the new Section 179 of the Tax Code, as implemented by RR No. 13-2004, the DST on taxable deposits which has a term of less than one year should be computed taking into consideration the number of days the deposit is outstanding as a fraction of 365 days. If the taxable deposit does not have a term or has a term of more than one year, the DST due should be P1 on each P200, or fractional part thereof, of the amount of deposit. RR No. 13-2004 does not, however, specify how to compute or when to pay DST on taxable deposits that do not have fixed terms and where depositors can either withdraw or make a deposit anytime.

RR No. 13-2004 further clarifies that the exemption for bank deposit accounts without a fixed term or maturity provided under Section 199(k) of the Tax Code, as amended by RA 9243, applies only to ordinary demand and savings deposits which are withdrawable upon demand by the depositor and earning rates of interest based on prevailing market rates for a regular saving/demand deposit account, irrespective of the amount deposited.

In the light of these developments, the position that special savings accounts are not subject to DST is no longer bankable, specifically with respect to special savings deposits opened beginning March 20, 2004, the date of effectivity of RA 9243. Also, the decisions of the court as to the taxability of special savings deposit would have no prospective application.

Certainly, the imposition of DST would "force" banks to repackage their special savings deposit products to make these more compliant with RA 9243. Inevitably though, the DST imposed would be factored into the interest rates that will be offered, and this could make special savings deposit products less attractive to depositors.

Viewed in this light, the imposition of DST on special savings deposit is clearly advancing a policy that discourages people from depositing their money with the banks. This makes us wonder where the legislators would like moneyed people to place their money.



Home Display Window
Theme : My Bakeware

- Lifestyle Graphics
- Big shopping bag fixture with all the basic bakeware essentials

SM wins award in Chicago

SM was named the winner of the GIA Pan-Asia Award at this year's International Home & Houseware Show held recently in Chicago.

The GIA or Global Innovator Award was introduced in 2002 by the International Houseware Association to recognize excellence in houseware retailing from around the world. It was created with the objective of encouraging innovation in houseware retailing throughout the world.

The competition is structured on a two-tier level, national and global. Co-sponsoring the award with IHA are 19 housewares trade publications, who sponsor the awards on a national or regional level. Nominations may come in two categories—independent houseware retailers and multiple location retailers with houseware departments. Retail Asia, a prestigious Singapore-based magazine, sponsored the award in the Asia-Pacific region.

National and regional winners then participate in the global competition at the International Home & Houseware Show, where both national and global winners are featured.

In its March issue, Retail Asia says, "Filipinos consider SM their shopping mecca. Its tremendous range of electric appliances, white goods, and houseware at different price points are crowd-pullers—and the reason why SM has emerged as the winner of the GIA Pan-Asia Award at this year's International Home & Housewares Show in Chicago."

"Shopping at SM is always a stimulating experience. Its big and bold graphics and well-coordinated cross-merchandising displays offer abundant new ideas, including for table settings and home décor."

Other winning retailers in the 2005 GIA Awards include Crate and Barrel and City Kitchens from the USA; Pom Pom from Canada; your kitchenshop from Australlia; and Total Food Equipmennt Ltd. from New Zealand.

With its wide assortment of carefully selected merchandise for contemporary lifestyles, SM's home section at all SM Department Stores is a favorite shopping destination for home makers and home enthusiasts.

SM REPRESENTATIVES AT GIA AWARDS. Senior AVP of HomeWorld for merchandise Levy Ng, assistant division merchant design manager Gina Ting, Martin Pegler of Retail Asia and president of the Retail Element, I.I. C. VP for marketing communication group Ed Ponce and Scott Kohno.

'Be the thing people are interested in'

By Raquel P. Gomez

JWT, the former J. Walter Thompson, plans to get back its heydays. The ad agency recently launched its name change.

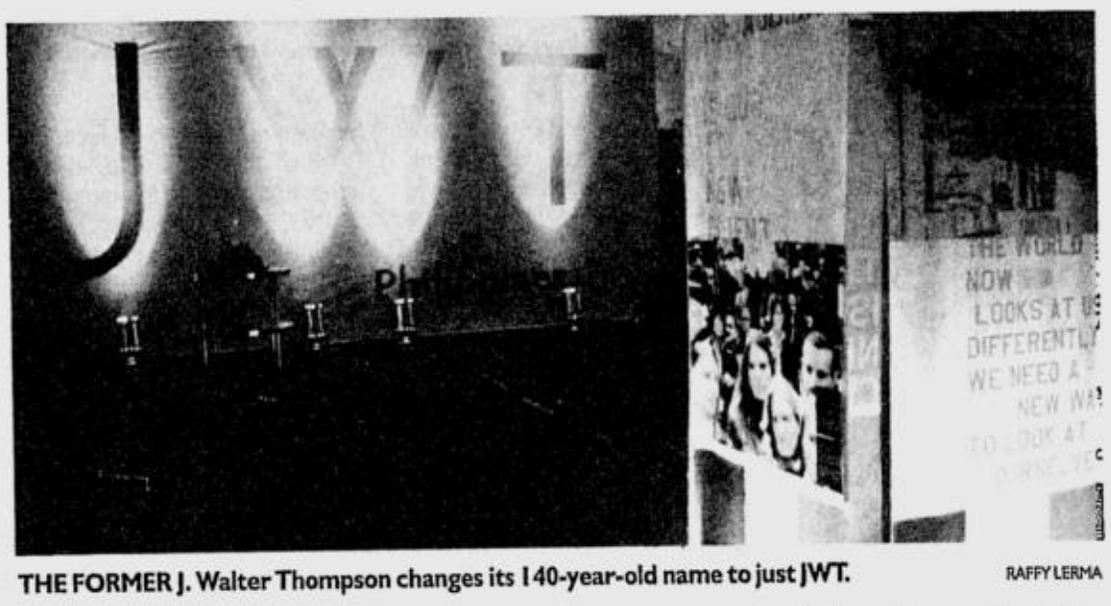
JWT's new vice chair Matthew Seddon, who took over Chris von Selle in January, says he intends to "take JWT back to the top of Philippine advertising."

Seddon, who used to be the managing director of Saatchi in Malaysia, plans to build a strong creative team and in the coming days he'll be announcing additional creative resource to the JWT.

A very outgoing Seddon admits he has already established a long relationship with the Philippines referring to a Filipina wife whom he married in Tarlac. During his introduction, Seddon, who's comfortable in a *barong*, was described as "passionate about parties," even attending one dressed as a *katipunero*.

The shorter and easier to recall "JWT" logo signals the birth of a new identity for the 140-year-old company, according to JWT's area director for Asia Pacific South Patrick Pitcher. Pitcher says it's the perfect time for the agency, which counts among the top 3 agencies in the world, to get a makeover. It used to be among the biggest in the Philippines.

"Why change a 140-year-old brand? The company's in fantastic shape. I think that this is the perfect time that we should change—when things are doing well. We need to become relevant to the consumer."



THE FORMER J. Walter Thompson changes its 140-year-old name to just JWT. RAFFY LERMA

MATTHEW Seddon

PATRICK Pitcher

Worldwide, JWT has been announcing the name change and an entirely different advertising philosophy and a new way of doing business.

JWT's battle cry is echoed by its new worldwide chief creative officer Craig Davis in his taped talk presented during the launch. "We should stop interrupting what people are interested in and actually be the thing that people are interested in."

JWT is now looking at the industry the non-traditional way by focusing on getting the attention of the audience rather than the product. It calls this "people's time" which it considers as the valuable new currency.

JWT's coming out party ended with a billiards game played by no less than the top pool players in the country Efren "Bata" Reyes and Django Bustamante. The billiard balls represent the kind of ideas and work JWT has defined to represent the effect of different advertisements or creative work on the audience. For example the No. 10 ball represents "world class" work, while the No. 1 ball represents a "boring" idea or work. So on and so forth.

JWT has more than 300 offices in 86 countries.

How to make consumers buy at first sight

From page B2-1

ing at the next level, such as moving displays or screens. We also experimented with in-store televisions to attract people," Lichauco says.

National Bookstore's designs typically undergo a major change twice a year: in February for the Valentine's Day celebration and June for the back-to-school rush.

"Retail also means having to entertain and catch attention of the people," Lichauco says.

Red Box

Exposure to the Western culture, and the latest fads and fashion, has made Filipinos' taste much more sophisticated.

No longer content with just the basic four walls, with proper lighting and ventilation, Filipinos now look for the little details that will make them put their money in one store, rather than the other, and this buying trend extends to karaoke bars and restaurants.

It used to be that karaoke-crazy Filipinos were content with just a microphone and a database of the latest music they can sing to. Not anymore.

Walden Chu, who heads the company that owns the Red Box franchise here, says in an interview that Filipinos demand the whole retail experience, from the landscaping to the lighting fixtures and even the fittings in the bathroom.

With this in mind, Red Box designed its flagship outlet in the upscale Greenbelt 3 mall in a way that sets it apart from its competitors.

In many ways, Red Box has become the standard of karaoke bars.

"The product, service and the environment are the focal points of consideration when we build store. The consumers demand it. They don't want to just have good food, they also want a good place," he says.

Red Box partnered with an architect and interior designer to come up with a design that combines design with functionality at the best possible price.

Signages are part of the total design package.

In Red Box, the signages comprise of aluminum stands that display the latest promotional offers, and large posters of the popular singers whose songs are part of Red Box's song menu.

"I believe that the design that we came up with in Red Box contributed a lot to people coming in. Before there was no premium on design, now it has become a necessary investment in retail," he says.

Chu says the trend started when the upscale Rockwell mall opened its doors in Makati City. That mall, with its manicured lawns, airy atmosphere and soft lights, awakened Filipinos to the latest designs in the retail industry.

Following that was the SM group's The Podium mall in Mandaluyong City, the upscale Greenbelt 3 mall that was even named one of the best in the world, and most recently, by the Gateway Mall in Quezon City.

Chu says the malls unconsciously put pressure on the tenants to also upgrade their styles to match their surroundings.

"Filipinos are so creative. And I believe our Red Box here even exceed the design standards in Hong Kong and Singapore," he says.

Plains and Prints

A consumer research study showed that passers-by usually spend less than 20 seconds looking at a store, before they move on to the next.

This means that outlets should have something to make the passer-by stop and take a closer look at what the store has to offer.

Plains and Prints, recently named the Most Promising Filipino Franchise in the retail category, knows this only too well, thus, it designed its stores in a manner that calls buying attention.

Plains and Prints general manager Roxanne Ang-Farillas says customers want stores selling clothes to be mainly clean with ample lighting. Clothes have to be organized efficiently since most of its buyers are busy people who do not really have time to linger.

"We asked our customers what they wanted from our store and they said they wanted the clothes to be grouped according to colors. They also want a mix of their basics and the new collections," Farillas says.

The same mix goes for the window displays. It does not let go of its staple basic clothes for the working people, which comprises a good part of its client base.

"I think that is what sets us apart from the others—our line of clothes that cater to all the needs of our clients—from working people to the students. We have both weekend and weekday work clothes, not just the casuals," she says.

A Plains and Prints store is also set apart by the larger than life posters of its celebrity endorser, Gretchen Barretto.

"Having her as our endorser really helped us because we did not advertise. But by having her as our endorser, we got instant recognition.

Plains and Prints started as a small stall in Greenhills in 1994. At the end of last year, it has grown to 33 stores, of which nine are run by franchisees.

Can SMEs balance growth and environmental care?

By Gertie Ampil Tirona
Contributor

WITH 70 percent of the world's manufacturing activity projected to be Asia-based and SME-driven in the coming decade, the question of whether SMEs can balance environmental care and economic growth comes to fore.

In a recent "green bag" briefing at the Asian Development Bank, AIM Professor Purba H. Rao, PhD., who teaches corporate environmentalism to Operations Management students at the W. SyCip Graduate School of Business, mapped out strategies that could ingrain the concept in business and industrial culture. Her confidence in the "doability" of this initiative stems from in-depth studies of successful trailblazers. Some of these have been documented in the two volumes she authored: Towards a Green Millennium (AIM-2001), a compilation of case studies of Southeast Asian organizations that have succeeded in putting in place their Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and Greening the Supply Chain (AIM-2004), a study of best practices involving "green" purchasing.

Biggest polluters

Rao observed that the modular trend, where large manufacturing firms either subcontract or outsource and merely retain quality control over their company's products and services, has led to the passing-on of their polluting activities to SMEs who act in tandem with principals usually based in geographically distant head offices. Such arrangements have made SME contractors "the biggest polluters." Why so?

"Because of limited funding, manpower and technical support, SMEs do not install or equip themselves with the abatement instruments to minimize their polluting activities. While the so-called greening of the manufacturing and servicing industries has been triggered by regulatory agencies, the results leave much to be desired. Failing this hard-line approach, SMEs are now being encouraged instead to go for voluntary initiatives, with their environmental performance being measured in terms of so-called environmental indicators," she explained.

Together with fellow-researchers Poinciano Intal, Olivia Castillo and Ather Sajjid, Rao conducted an empirical study to determine whether there is a strong and significant correlation between the environmental performance of SMEs, the initiatives they undertake, their environmental indicators, and their competitiveness. Their goal was to provide a roadmap to an environmental indicator system and an action plan to facilitate its implementation by SMEs. The team surveyed state-of-the art companies and SMEs to compare their respective environmental performances and to underscore the fact that this could lead as well to superior business performance and competitiveness.

Environmental indicators

Rao stressed the importance of so-called environmental indicators: "These allow a firm to make measurements related to environmental performance. There is a saying that whatever gets measured, gets implemented and gets corrected. Thus, once the environmental indicators are able to measure the environmental initiatives and the performance, the environmental concerns, if any, would get corrected. The idea is to measure the different indices of performance in the environmental arena and then benchmark them with what they should be. They serve as a monitoring tool to track the environmental performance of SMEs."

For the uninitiated in matters related to the greening of industry, among whom are numerous SMEs, Rao assured that "we can use the indicators either within a structured environmental initiative such as an Environmental Management System (EMS), or an ISO 14000 certification, or as a standalone system to enhance environmental performance."

: Based on the AIM's experience as an ISO 14001 certified institution with an EMS in place since 1999, there is no denying that a structured EMS requires a lot of work to implement, not to mention the costs of training, certification, monitoring, and the importance of documentation.

Rao leads the way for SMEs to do something more than their usual but with less: "They can start by using the indicators and just start performing, i.e., measuring and monitoring their impact on the environment in terms of how much solid wastes they are producing, how much water they are using, how much electricity they are consuming etc.

Rao referred to the guidelines adopted from the Federal Environmental Ministry of Bonn and Berlin which distinguished between: (1) environmental performance indicators which measure performance; (2) environmental management indicators which measure the process; and (3) environment condition indicators which measure the impact of the organization on the water quality, air quality, contamination in the ground water, etc.

These indicators essentially guide companies in decision-making using precise information on matters such as water usage, air emissions, energy consumption, the amount and type of packaging materials being used, and whether these are recyclable or reusable. Needless to say, the extent of top management support and the company's effect on the surrounding environment also come into consideration.

Using performance and management indicators, the Rao team set about surveying a sampling of 126 SMEs across six industry sectors: food, fashion accessories, furniture, hotel and restaurant, automotive, and electroplating.

SME initiatives

They proceeded to do an (1) exploratory analysis to draw out insights; (2) a gap analysis based on the comparative performance of SMEs and state-of-the-art companies in the same sector; and (3) a confirmatory analysis to find out the significance and the correlations between the management indicators, the performance indicators, environmental performance, and competitiveness.

The results showed that among their top environmental initiatives, SMEs went for cleaner production or the prevention of pollution at the source; the greening of suppliers; and green marketing focusing on their outbound operations and logistics.

They further segmented the SMEs and arrived at attributes peculiar to their cluster. For example, the majority of the subject SMEs who were small in terms of asset size and workforce were doing some amount of green marketing but were not doing cleaner production nor greening suppliers.

"The logic here," explains Rao, "is because their outbound logistics are very visible to the public. It is no wonder that they are trying to green their outbound logistics. They would not want to stand out as doing something harmful to the environment!"

On the other hand, Rao was surprised to find out that the smaller cluster of SMEs, those closer to the "M" with an asset size of P15M - P100M and a workforce of more than 500, scored negative on green marketing, but high on cleaner production and moderately on greening of suppliers and non-traditional initiatives.

Of these, she singled out the hotel industry and the automotive sector as doing a lot towards the improvement of their processes to reduce waste generation

Looking further at the results of their intra-industry study, Rao cited the furniture sector's performance and compared how the SMEs were doing versus what they should be doing, and versus the state-of-the-art companies within the same industry. It came as no surprise that SMEs benchmarked against the big players were not doing well when it came to the use of raw materials as inputs and the use of packaging.

Roadmap

How to bring these academic findings to implementable levels? Based on the completeness of SME responses to their survey, Dr. Rao was able to gauge their relative doability. Expressed in terms of ratios these included about 16 indicators, some of which pertained to environmental performance while others involved management: consumption/output ratio, raw material efficiency, packaging to total material ratio, total waste to total input ratio, water consumption to total output ratio, waste for recycling to total waste ratio, reusable packaging to total packaging ratio, hazardous input to total input ratio, hazardous waste to total waste ratio, emissions to air, energy cost to output ratio, etc.

Dr. Rao 's final prescription baited political will and commitment - the development of a system for Corporate Environmental Reporting (CER), a very popular trend amongst early-bird practitioners. Once equipped with a pocketful of indicators, juxtaposing numbers and adding the words for public consumption should be a cinch. The Annual Report serves as the lasting indicator that SMEs indeed saved the Earth.

(The author is EMS Coordinator of the Asian Institute of Management)

DTI and PSE sign Memoradum of Agreement to foster closer cooperation. Photo shows BOI Governor Armin Rauel Santos, Trade and Industry Secretary Juan B. Santos, PSE's Francis Lim and Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima.

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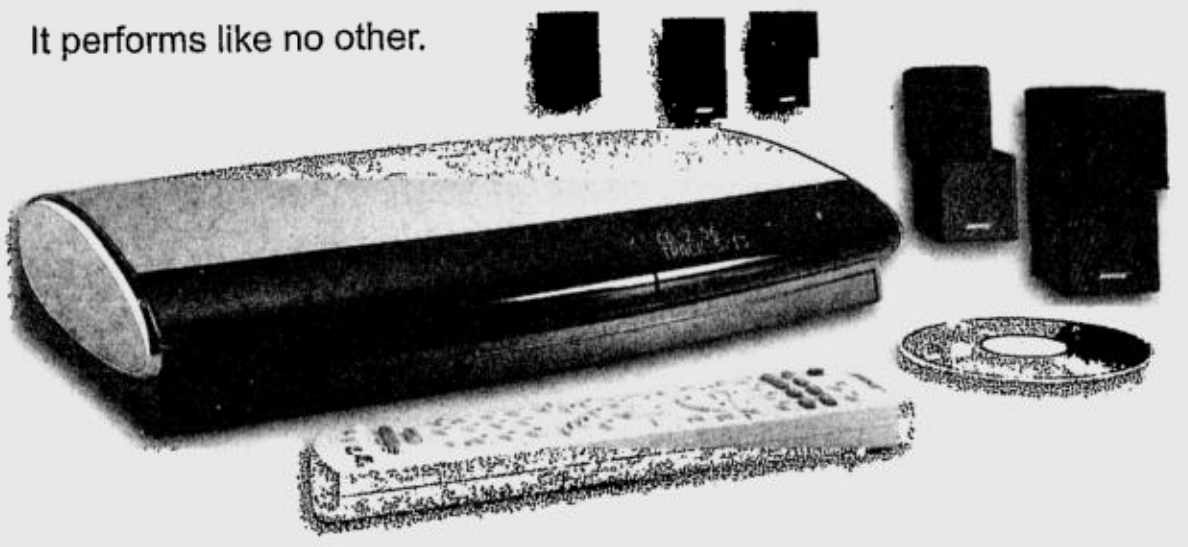

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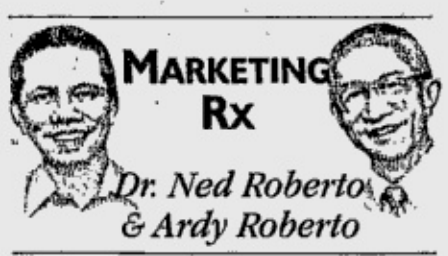
BUSINESS Friday

Advice on pricing - I



Q: I'M AN avid reader of your column. I am a new manufacturer of fashion jewelry and native handbags here in Cebu. I'm planning to join trade shows here and abroad. We believe our products are of export quality. Could you help us in pricing? How do we compute our price so that we will be competitive in the international market? - Dennis Lim

A: You're actually talking about two product lines: jewelry and native handbags. You're also talking about two market segments: here and abroad. However, your question about pricing concerns more the international market than the domestic market. So let's simplify matters then by discussing your pricing concern in relation to the international market and to just one of your product lines, say, native handbags.

You can then diagnose your pricing question on your other product line—fashion jewelry—and in your other market segment along the lines that we will take for your native handbags in the international market.

Let's begin our diagnosis along your question of how to compute your price so that you will be competitive in the international market.

Begin with your competitor

Your starting point is your decision about your target competitor in your "international market" for your native handbags. What is the price of your target competitor price in the specific international market you want to participate in?

This means that you need to do some serious preliminary fact finding and data gathering. Other exporters, who want to skip this step, leave everything about pricing to their "buyers." We're not sure if you want to do that. We assume that you'd like to be directly involved in this marketing decision. So let's proceed along that assumption.

Price sensitivity

As a "beginning price," your target competitor's pricing needs adjust upward or downward according to other primary pricing considerations. The first of these is your target market's pricing sensitivity which is influenced, among other things, by product quality.

You said that your handbags are of "export quality." That is you, the marketer, speaking. But what about your target international consumers? How do they see your handbag? Have you done product testing to find out?

We're sure your immediate reaction to that last question is: "How can I afford to survey my target German and French consumers?" (Just to lend specificity to our discussion, let's assume your initial target international markets are Germany and France.) If you do your product testing in Germany and France, that is sure to cost you an arm and a leg and maybe even more. So don't do it there. Be cost-effective. Resort to "surrogate" respondents but who are still German and French. Here's a specific example to explain.

How Jollibee 'exported' the Champ burger

When we used to do Jollibee's product testing and it wanted to find out, for example, how Californians would react to the Champ, we didn't go to Los Angeles and San Francisco to do the product test. We product tested with LA and SF tourists billeted at our five-star hotels. Three of these hotels consented to our doing the product test with their guests from Los Angeles and San Francisco. That's how we got the data necessary to answer that all-important question: "How do your target German and French consumers see your handbag? What values and features do they see in your handbags as distinctive or else below par versus competition?" So product test in Cebu hotels (where you already are) and in Davao hotels where you may find your German and French tourists.

Those perceived distinctive and below-par values now become the basis for your upward and downward adjustment of your beginning price.

Next week, we'll discuss how these values can now help you set your prices.

E-mail questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

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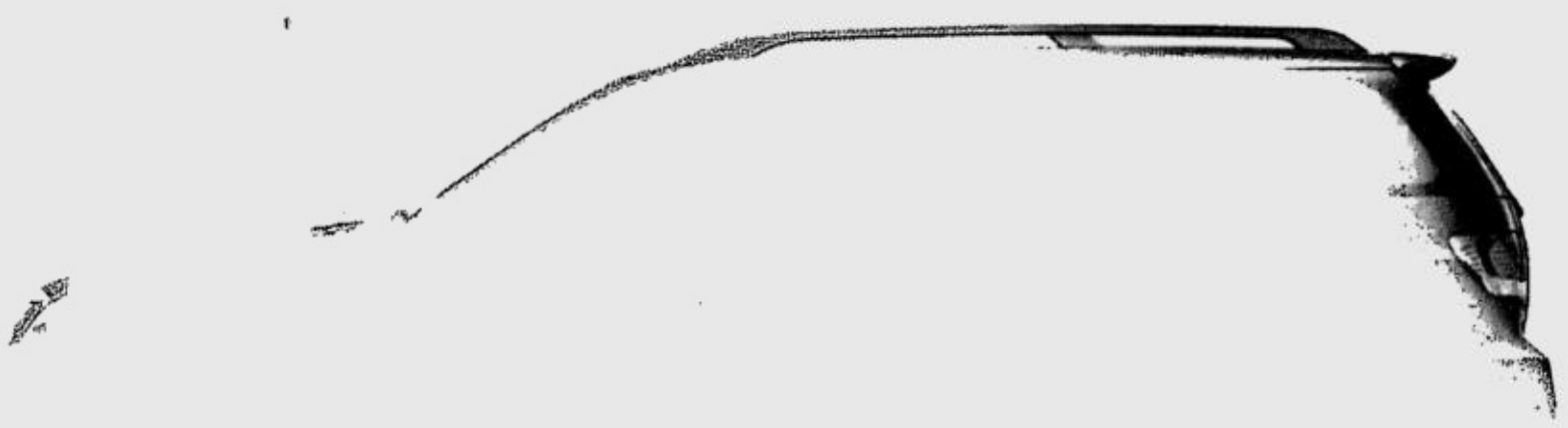
" Is it wrong to think THE WORLD IS MINE? "
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Home truths hit the furnishings industry

WASHINGTON—Home may be where the heart is, but is it still where the big bucks are?

A surge in house buying and home improvement, helped by a maturing baby-boom generation with cash to spare, has created a profitable few years for furniture and home furnishings stores.

But recent data show that a different picture is emerging.

The US furnishings industry—estimated to be worth $120 billion a year—has been hit by slackening demand combined with red-hot competition, which has pushed some players into a damaging price war and sparked talk of consolidation.

"The sector had a really solid run for a few years up until last year, when we started to see a couple of hiccups in consumer spending," said Joan Storms, an analyst at Wedbush Morgan Securities.

Housewares retailers like Williams-Sonoma and Bed, Bath & Beyond rode the first wave, but general stores, discount outlets and home improvement stores from Target Corp. to Home Depot have since jumped aboard.

"People were pointing to concerns about higher interest rates, a slowdown generally in housing activity. But there also appears to be some sort of a secular spending trend. Consumers have loaded up on home goods over the past few years and now there are some competitive spending alternatives, whether that be travel, apparel or consumer electronics," Storms said.

March retail sales figures showed furniture and home furnishings stores were the weakest performers in the month relative to total retail. Division sales grew 1.9 percent year over year, continuing a notable slowing trend that first surfaced in early 2004, AG Edwards analyst Brian Postol noted.

Where are the customers?

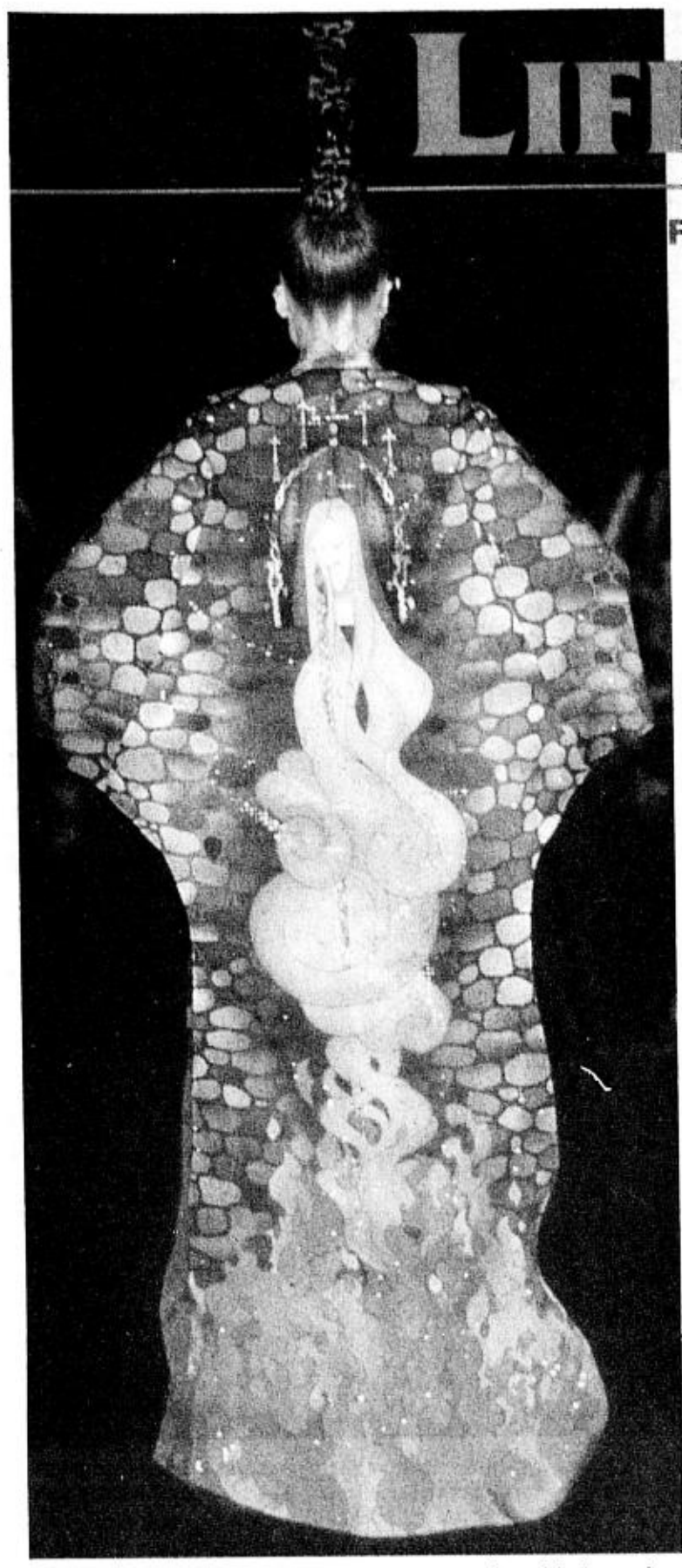
One of the big changes in the outlook for furnishing stores is a shift in customer demographics, industry watchers say.

Peak spending for home furnishings is highest in the 45 to 54 age bracket—the baby boomers—according to a recent paper by analysts at AG Edwards. They said the age bracket grew 48 percent from 1990-2000 but that growth is projected at only about 19 percent from 2000-2010.

Looking to 2010-2020, it is projected to fall 12 percent over the current decade, Postol noted.

"As the baby boomers are getting older they are downsizing, potentially. They don't need to buy as many home furnishings and they may even be pushing some of their furnishings off on their children, who may not go out and buy," Storms added.

Rocketing house prices and cheaper mortgage rates had allowed homeowners to refinance their existing properties—and released a huge pool of spare cash. But mortgage rates have started to rise since last summer and house prices have largely tapered off. *Reuters*



THE CLOSING number and the Swarovski crystal-studded cape that embodies Basso and Brooke's Fall 2005 collection: medieval pageantry, castles and love in fairy tales

LIFESTYLE

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

It takes two

The British design label Basso and Brooke combines digital print technology and high fashion

POWER PRINTERS. Brazilian Bruno Basso and Englishman Chris Brooke in Singapore, awaiting their catwalk collection

By Kitty Go
Contributor

FROM THE CATWALK, even to trained, fashionably spectacled eyes, the British design label Basso and Brooke (BnB; www.bassoandbrooke.com) simply looks, well, like a printed line. However, upon close inspection and discussion with its founders and designers, Bruno Basso and Chris Brooke, one finds that each garment is not simply digitally printed but is a combination of line drawings and colors laid on top of each other, then digitally printed.

For many, this may simply be a vanity project or an experiment in print technology. It certainly is not cheap at a cost of at least £50 a meter for printing, not including treating natural fabrics (they like to use wool and silk) for digitizing. Could it possibly be the future of print design?

Brazilian Bruno Basso holds up a psychedelic jacket with stripes, florals, argyles and figures all in one and says, "You know printing with several screens like Hermes scarves is a very old way..."

Surely, Italian fashion manufacturing giant AEFFE, cannot be wrong when the company decided to invest in the label after BnB presented its Spring 2005 collection. AEFFE is founded by designer Alberta Ferretti and today, the company produces clothing, swimwear and shoes all over the world for names such as Moschino, Narciso Rodriguez, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Pollini and, of course, Alberta Ferretti.

The duo came to AEFFE's attention when they won £100,000 as prize money at London's Fashion Fringe, an event that encourages and discovers new design talent.

Usually confusing, sometimes misunderstood and always over-the-top, BnB is now in the most envied of fashion situations. A combination of talent, beginner's luck, the right press and a large company's vision got them to where they are today. For most labels, the climb to the pinnacle of fashion recognition takes years, if it ever happens.

INQUIRER met the dynamic duo, who counts Kylie, Jamelia, Robbie Williams and Pink as clients, through an event with the British Trade Commission in Singapore, where they presented their collection to an audience of socialites, fashionistas and some of the biggest names in the Lion City's fashion industry.

Your clothes are certainly striking and the prints are outstanding—more like a modern Leonard than Pucci.

Bruno Basso (BB): Oh, don't get shocked with the clothes. Once you separate the pieces, they are very wearable.

How did your partnership begin?

BB: I met Chris three years ago through friends, and we wondered how we could collaborate. I'm a graphic designer—not a fashion designer—with a background in advertising and journalism. Chris is a women's wear design graduate from Kingston and Central Saint Martins. When we met, Chris was doing commissions for celebrities and pop stars mostly from the music business. Then we started experimenting using my graphic design skills. But we were doing digital printing, which was very expensive and all our money from our (day) jobs went into this project.

Now that you have a major player as a backer, what do you expect from AEFFE and what do they expect from you?

IT/ C2

IT'S NEVER TOO MUCH. A striped base, animal prints and cannons are only three of a multitude of prints that gets digitally printed on wool and silk. Leggings and shoes employ the old-fashioned fashion practice of matching shoes and clothing but updated in far-out prints.

It takes two

From page C1

BB: To be as creative as we can within an industry. We are designers not artists.

Chris Brooke (CB): We are artistic designers!

BB: A designer is a function—you have a responsibility. If you are an artist, it is more about expression than the compromise of industry. AEFFE is very excited because sales for this season were fantastic.

CB: They have an amazing standard of production and resources. Already we have a whole set-up in Italy.

Why do you think they chose you over all others because there are so many other labels that have been in business longer?

CB: I've asked myself that, but I never asked them. They probably know a good thing when they see it. (laughs)

BB: I think because we are different and edgy.

CB: Basically they took a risk. We have no history of selling a lot of clothes. We had a 12-outfit collection with a prize from Fashion Fringe and that's all—which is amazing...

BB: But with those 12 outfits, we got Harrod's, Brown's, Harvey Nicks and Selfridge's, and we got a lot of press because of Fashion Fringe. I think they saw the potential.

Aside from being creative, what other commitments do you have to AEFFE?

BB: We have to do proper collections.

CB: We have creative control, but they give us guidelines on the structure of the business.

How do you divide your work?

CB: We do our own research. I do design, and he does prints and graphic design. Mine involves cutting, patterns (shape/silhouette), color palette, direction. Then we both come together and have meeting (on how prints can work into design patterns).

BB: Both of us decided on using digital prints. This is the key to the new generation of creativity. Years ago, to produce a book you had to do a thousand books because it wouldn't be financially viable to do one. Today, you can do whatever you want at any quality. Like with digital printing, you can do only a few meters if you want.

Do you think you will ever show outside of London?

CB: With the competition that we won, we are obliged to show in London for the next five years. But we can do small shows outside.

BB: But AEFFE, despite being Italian, has labels like Narciso Rodriguez, who shows in NY; Gaultier shows in Paris. We are their only name in London at the moment.

ENGLISH ECCENTRICS. Wool coat with brown leather inserts and argyle printed sleeves tops a skirt in another print with brown and green leather yoke. On waist is a bag with a girl's face and braids.

CB: This is the first time they backed not only a new British company but one completely concentrated in print.

How would you like to move this name?

BB: Into interiors and menswear. Maybe a small couture house....

There's no way your line would be noticed other than being shown over-the-top.

CB: We show it head to toe, but there's no way you can go out in that.

BB: Our latest collection is summarized as Versace meets Japan.

Do you think you also got noticed because people in fashion are so tired of global, iconic labels?

BB: A designer's challenge is to dress people not to look the same. We have established a look that normally takes years to achieve. We have a strong identity and you can recognize it...

But that's only for a certain level of fashion followers. And for the price, it would be a hard sell (an evening dress is about £2,500, tops are £600-1,000 and T-shirts are £150-200).

BB: In the long run, it will be recognizable. And our prices are at the luxury level not because we just want to sell at high prices but because our digital and processing costs are high.

Tell me about your plans for menswear. What do you think you can do for the menswear market today?

CB: Prints!

BB: Everyone is asking for it—buyers, press, friends—so maybe in two to three years time or six seasons.

CB: British men specially are so safe and neutral...

But that's all guys, especially Americans.

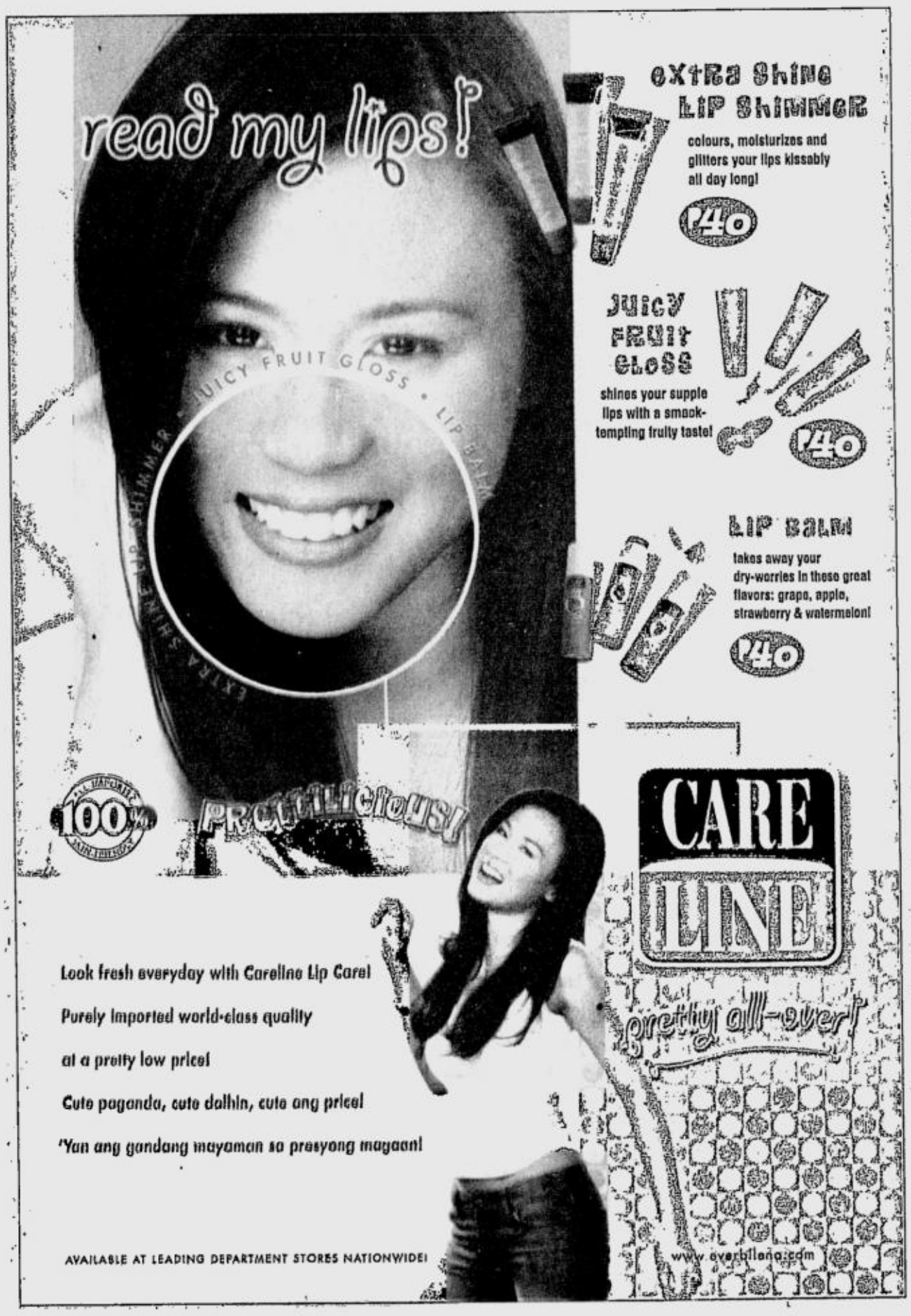
CB: Well, except in Florida on holiday. Men are so set in their ways. They're afraid to even wear a pink flower.

BB: You don't know Brazilian men—they are really modern and look at the way they do their hair... It's because he's British that he cannot see. I'm an outsider and I can see potential in British men. I don't see the same openness in Americans but the British are more open to new things than anyone else.

How about the Japanese?

CB: Definitely the Japanese boys and skaters.

BB: Our prints are like manga cartoons.



Destination for chic, plus-size women

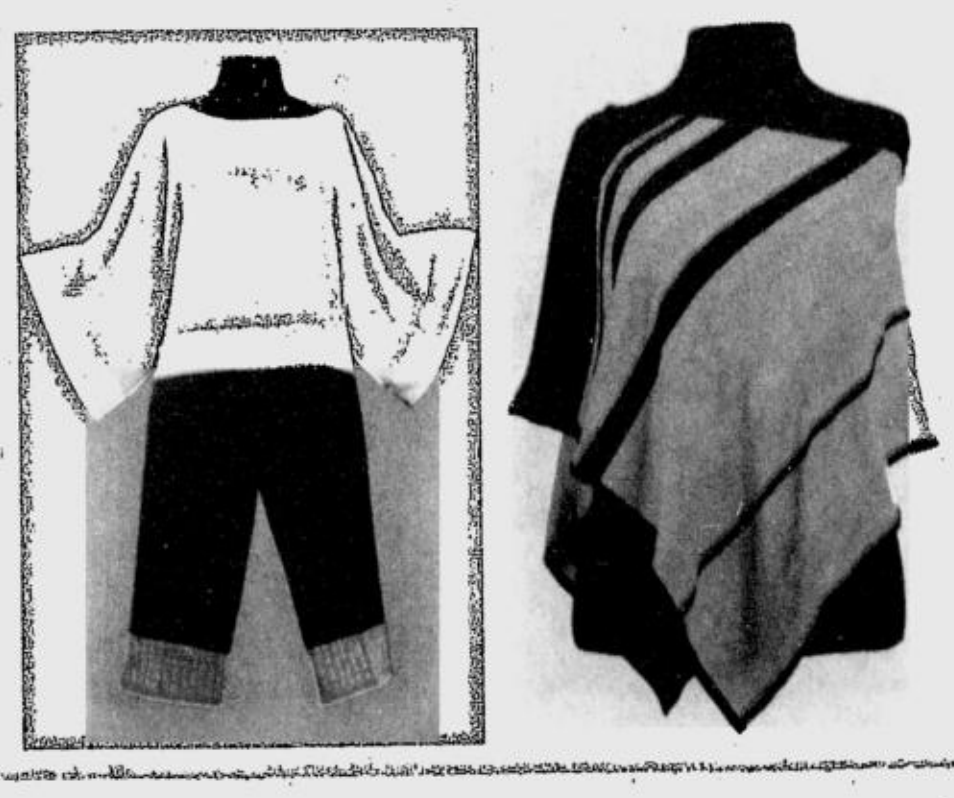
LUSCIOUS, the brand exclusively designed for plus-size yet sophisticated women, recently opened a second outlet at the 2/L Gateway Mall in Cubao's Araneta Center.

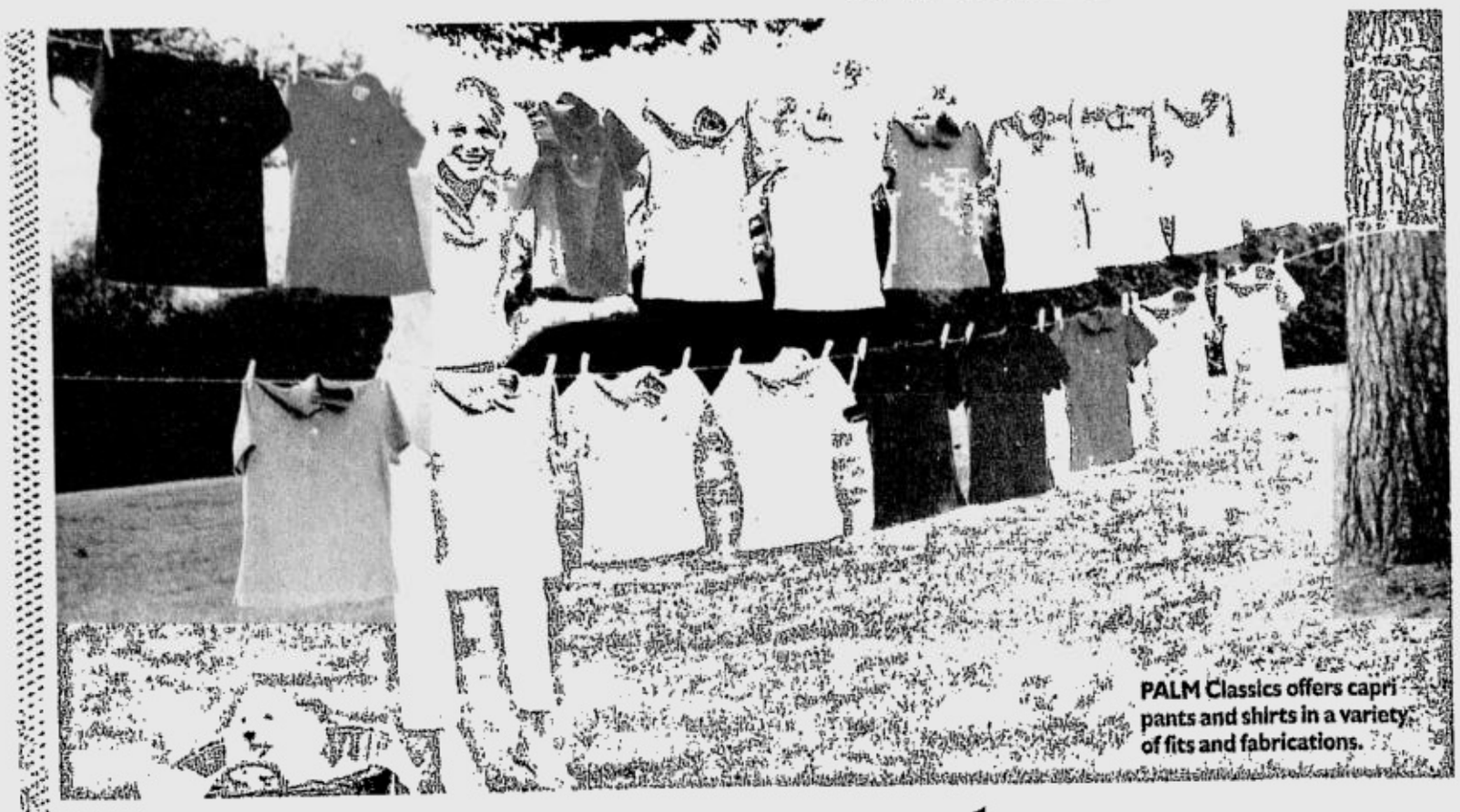
One of the pioneers in serving the fashion requirements of plus-size women, Luscious features a whole range of clothing and accessories that are distinctly chic and flattering to the figure.

Since it understands plus-size women's bodies and needs, Luscious offers sizes 12 to 28 with a wide selection of tops, pants, skirts, knits and evening wear in a variety of styles to choose from.

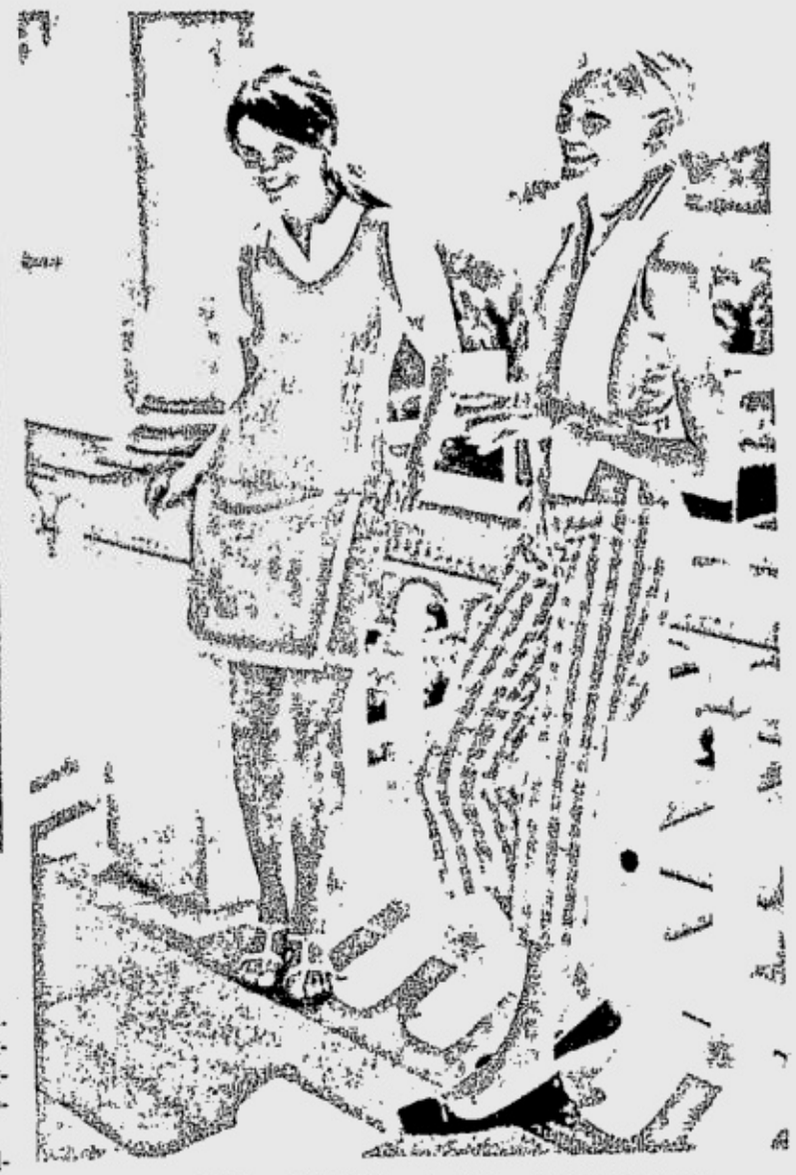
The new Gateway branch will showcase the same stylish wear for Filipina women who normally have a hard time finding clothes that have just the right fit. This will complement the first Luscious store at the Goldcrest Building in Ayala Center.

Call 8923885/8176175 or e-mail luscious_plus@yahoo.com





PALM Classics offers capri pants and shirts in a variety of fits and fabrications.



FOR THE SPORTY set, Lilly Pulitzer's Club collection features colorful pieces from Lobb, Shelly Tank and Val.

Mediterranean-inspired statements

BY TRAVELING to the original inspiration for bold and vivacious dressing—the Mediterranean—Lilly Pulitzer gives birth to her new collection, Sea of Color. With looks inspired by this vibrant coast, every Lilly girl will make a colorful statement in 2005.

Playful silhouettes in bold, bright hues are given extra flair with exotic fabrications like silk charmeuse, boucle, silk chiffon and cashmere. The luxurious collection features a number of signature prints including Belle Ville, a watercolor print infused with Mediterranean coastal scenery and wrought iron architecture.

Lively animal prints like Croc Monsieur, Les Monkeys and Elefrance give an animated Lilly twist to Mediterranean mainstays. Ornate details like beaded tassels, picot edges, ruching and a specially made "Lilly Lace" add some extra sizzle to the pieces, where chic strapless, halter and shift styles are brought to life with a Riviera feel.

Novelty pieces are in, including a flirty dress made entirely of multiple grosgrain ribbons. Palm Classics offers capri pants and shirts in a variety of fits and fabrications. This season's polo for girls is offered in various sizes in about 25 bright colors.

For the sporty set, Lilly Pulitzer's Club collection has colorful, authentic pieces like the Lobb skirt, a flirty pleated skirt with printed poplin inside the pleats. Then there's the new Olympia dress with contrast binding, and the Shelly Tank and Val skirt with pink and green ric rac trim.

Popular golf styles like the Birdie Short and Putter Capri are offered in new colorful prints like Line Drive, Perfect Shot and a Tee Time, and Hit the Links embroidery. Lilly Pulitzer also offers a new Golf Polo, a slim fitting shirt that will help you swing with comfort and ease.

Whether lounging by the pool in your favorite country club or relaxing on a beach, cover-ups in cotton voile and chic suits, and sarongs with decorative details like pom pom trim, contrasting belts and empire seams will surely turn heads your way.

Completing the ensemble are the right accessories, like a sunny hat with a suit or a patchwork belt with a pair of khaki capris.

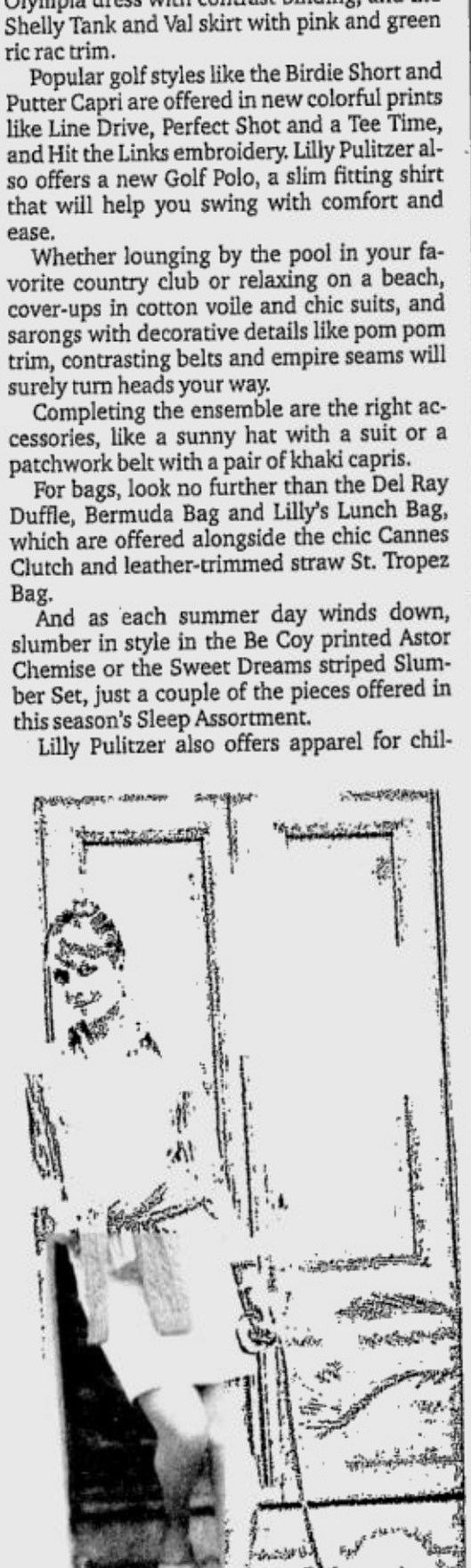
For bags, look no further than the Del Ray Duffle, Bermuda Bag and Lilly's Lunch Bag, which are offered alongside the chic Cannes Clutch and leather-trimmed straw St. Tropez Bag.

And as each summer day winds down, slumber in style in the Be Coy printed Astor Chemise or the Sweet Dreams striped Slumber Set, just a couple of the pieces offered in this season's Sleep Assortment.

Lilly Pulitzer also offers apparel for children, as well as ladies' shoes, jewelry, a complete home collection and a new book entitled Essentially Lilly, A Guide to Colorful Entertaining. The children's clothes are a pint-sized version of the ladies' line, reflecting the same hues and prints in charming styles appropriate for infants, toddlers and girls sized 4-16.

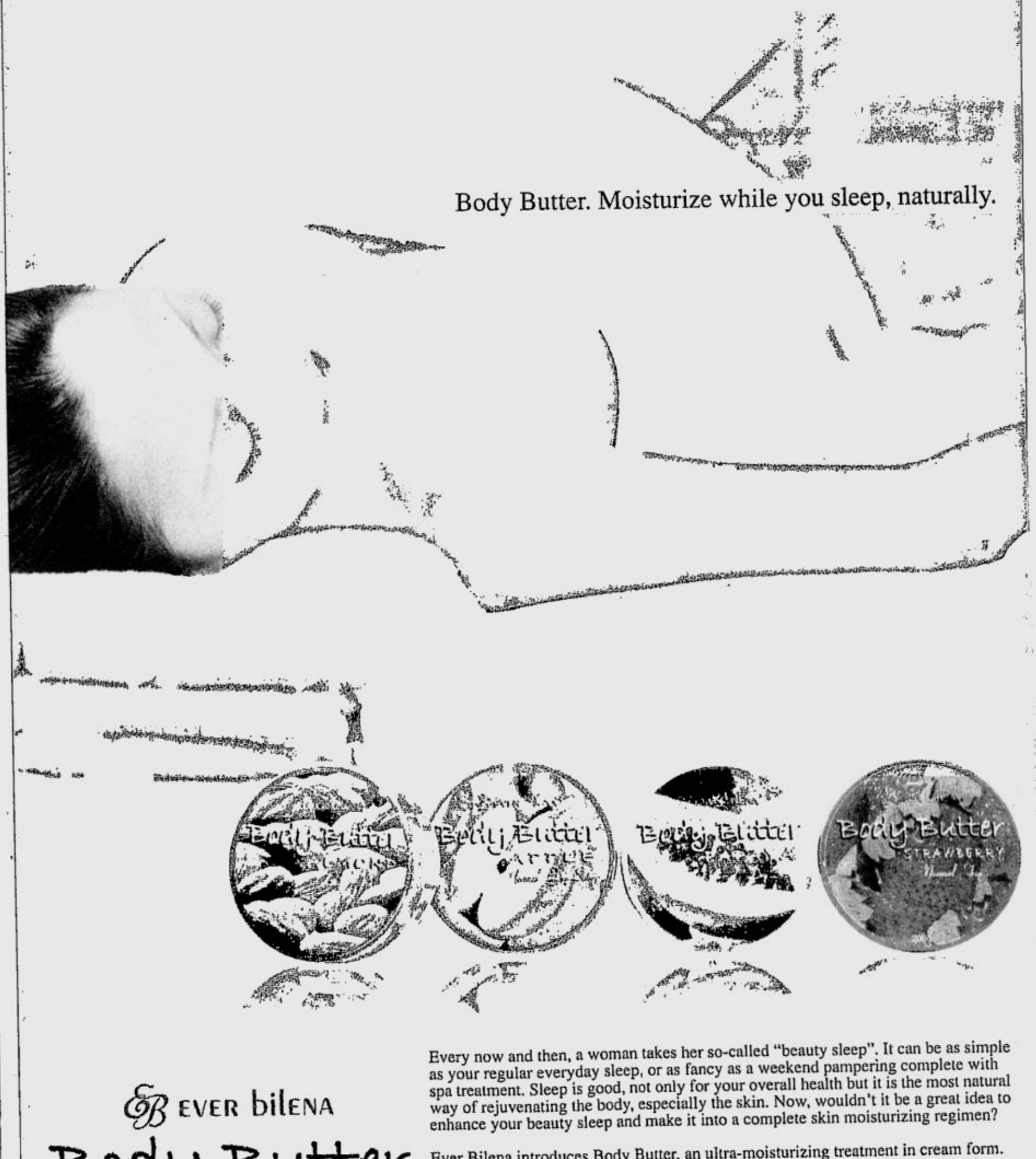
Lilly Pulitzer, a well-loved brand in the US, currently has 75 retailers all over America. Lilly Pulitzer is also sold in such big department stores as Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdales, Neiman and Nordstrom, as well as upscale specialty shops and clubs nationwide.

In Manila, Lilly Pulitzer clothes are available at the In Style boutique at the 5th Floor of Edsa Shangri-La Mall.



PALM Classics' polo and Lobb skirt

Body Butter. Moisturize while you sleep, naturally.



EVER bilENA
Body Butter
EVER bEAUTiful

Every now and then, a woman takes her so-called "beauty sleep". It can be as simple as your regular everyday sleep, or as fancy as a weekend pampering complete with spa treatment. Sleep is good, not only for your overall health but it is the most natural way of rejuvenating the body, especially the skin. Now, wouldn't it be a great idea to enhance your beauty sleep and make it into a complete skin moisturizing regimen?

Ever Bilena introduces Body Butter, an ultra-moisturizing treatment in cream form. It is to be applied, ideally, after taking a bath before going to sleep. As your body "repairs" itself during sleep, Body Butter can deeply moisturize your skin.

Body Butter. Your ultimate beauty sleep treatment.

Introductory price: P40 per 30 gram tube, and P150 per 200 gram jar.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE
29, 2005

Summer glam

BINIBINING Pilipinas-World Carlene Aguilar in turquoise see-through top (P2,999) and long amber necklace (P1,799) from Mango, Gateway Mall

FROM BEAUTY queens to summer's fashion darlings, the Binibining Pilipinas 2005 titlists show us how to beat the summer heat with cool and trendy outfits from Gateway Mall's hip fashion shops.

At Gateway Mall, summer is sensual, relaxing and hot with body-hugging tops, cool swimwear, see-through tees and hot pants from the Spring-Summer collection of top fashion brands Mango, Fornarina and Rustan's.

Showing off the trendiest in summer wear are Bb. Pilipinas Universe Gionna Cabrera, Bb. Pilipinas-World Carlene Aguilar, Bb. Pilipinas International Precious Lara Quigaman, Bb. Pilipinas-Tourism Wendy Valdez and Bb. Pilipinas second runner-up Melanie Ediza.

So, flaunt that bronzed body now, and add more sizzle to the season with Gateway Mall's fashion glamour for summer!

BB. Pilipinas-Universe Gionna Cabrera in floral jacket (P6,699) and pink tank top (P699) by Mango

GIONNA in white blouse (P2,950) by Sinequanone at Rustan's and denim shorts (P4,490) by Fornarina with long amber necklace (P1,799) and orange cuff (P999) by Mango

BB. Pilipinas-International Precious Lara Quigaman in floral blouse/poncho (P4,545) from Fornarina, green tank top (P699) by Mango, white capri pants (P4,231) and white closed shoes (P4,344) by Fornarina

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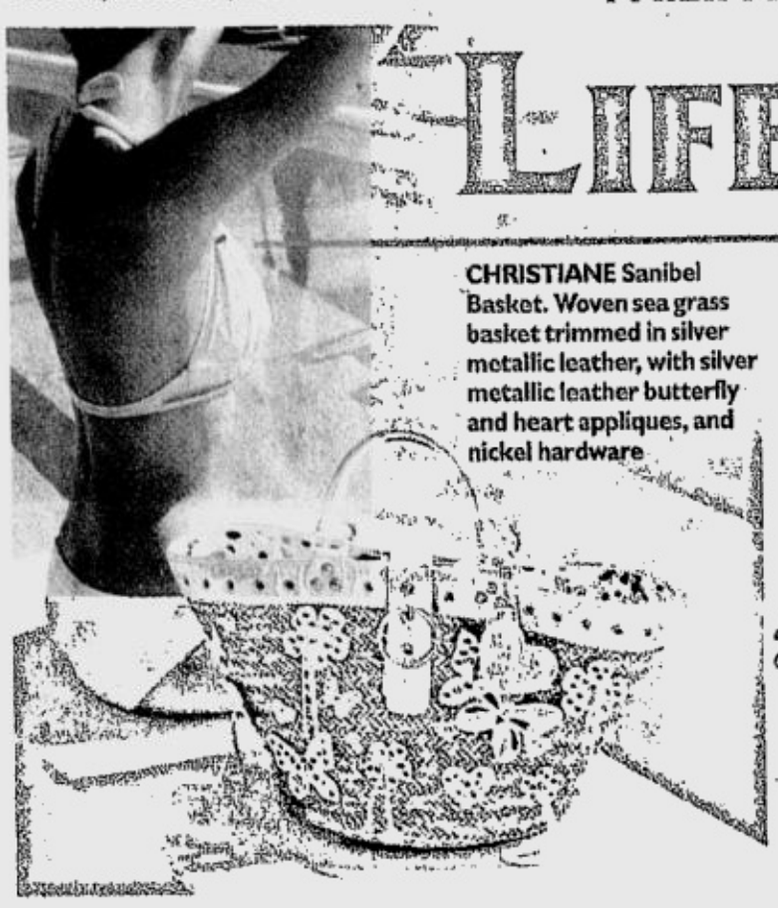


CHRISTIANE Sanibel Basket. Woven sea grass basket trimmed in silver metallic leather, with silver metallic leather butterfly and heart appliques, and nickel hardware

Bright, sunny and fresh as always

LAETITIA Capri Basket Bag. Woven rattan small basket bag trimmed with linen and pebbled leather, linen in gingham

DREW Antigua Clutch. Woven willow clutch with butterfly brooch detail, lambskin flap with contrast metallic leather piping and brocade lining

IN THE SPRING collection of Rafe, Rafe Totengco creates another new season of relaxed and colorful handbags and shoes.

The collection features stylish satchels and hobos in Italian cotton canvas with glazed leather trim in cool pastel shades. It also has new takes on the native motif with shoulder baskets and totes trimmed with leather to bring a breath of fresh air to the season.

There are also whimsical accents with bright totes on Rafe's signature gumball print and graphic print sandals with beaded thongs.

The new line also has the mini doctor's bag in candy-colored pebble grain leather.

One of the most acclaimed of New York's new generation of designers, the multi-awarded Rafe donated 15 percent of gross sales from its New York store last February.

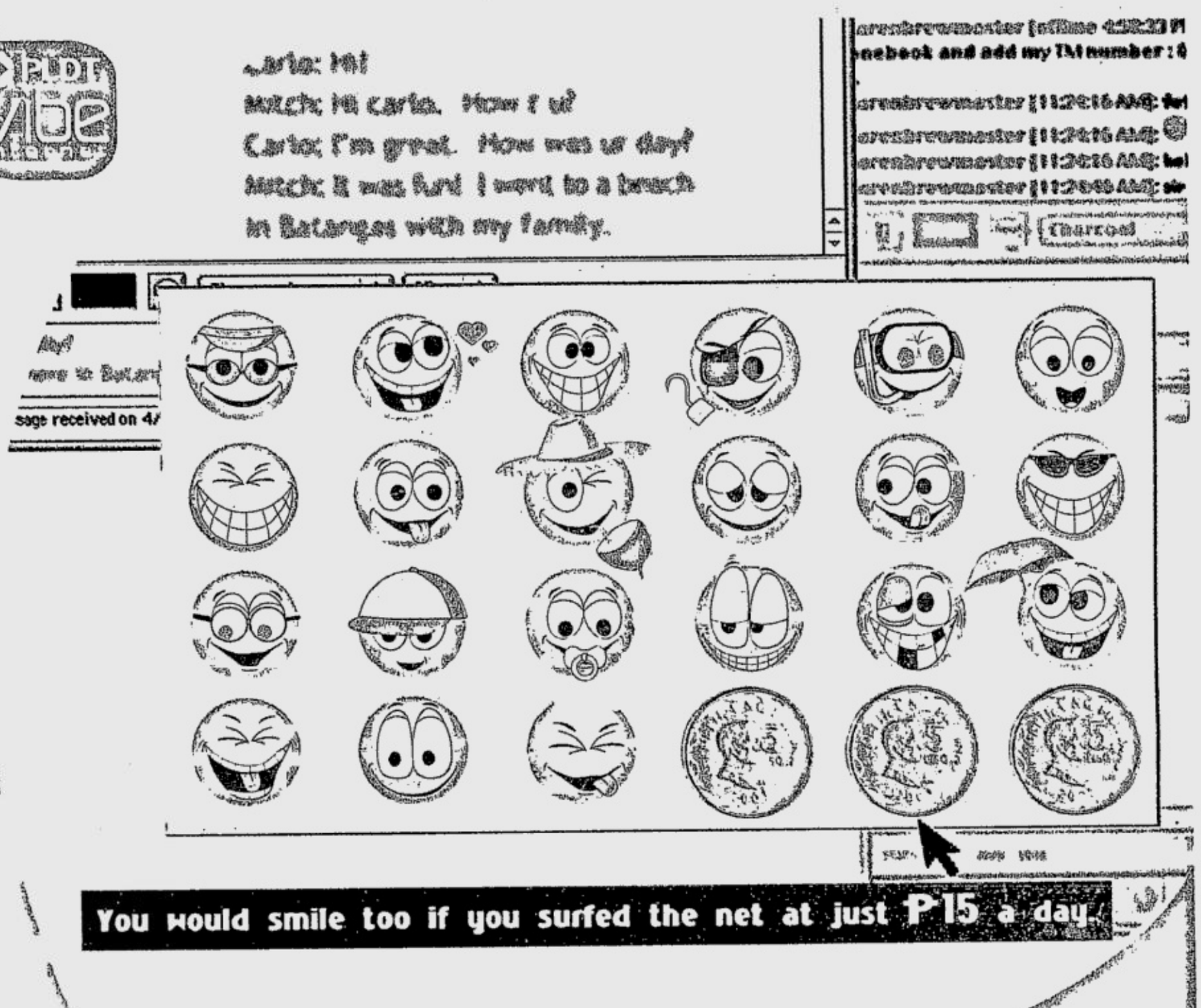
Rafe was launched to much acclaim in 1995 with a debut collection at New York's Bergdorf Goodman store.

Rafe is available in Manila exclusively at MIX, at Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City.

LIV Bleecker Tote in carnation pink, large tote in textured bison leather with contrast stitching and nickel snap-lock closure

ELLEN Key West Sneaker. Slip-on with rubber bottom and Rafe signature Key West butterfly printed upper

LISA Capri Tote in pink. Medium shoulder basket tote in rattan, trimmed with linen and pebbled leather, lined with gingham



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THE BIG HOT FIVE. Basketball hunk JR Wacker, boyish charmer and tennis champ Chase Tinio, gorgeous print and TV model Bianca Araneta, top male model Robby Mananquil and hot race-car institution Pepon Marave

THE LOPEZ clan

BRILLIANT architect and interior designer Anna Sy with pal, Sevrine Miaihle

LORRAINE Everisto with her steady man, Yves Alexander Simon

A day at the polo club

FILA'S *famille*. Wanda Louwallien, son-in-law Butch Albert, Cris Albert and Ana Bitong

WE LOVE POLO. Ric and Bonnie Santos

ON A RARE afternoon out, Chari Lao Bagatsing and daughter Stephanie Bagatsing Bitong with Franco Gallardo

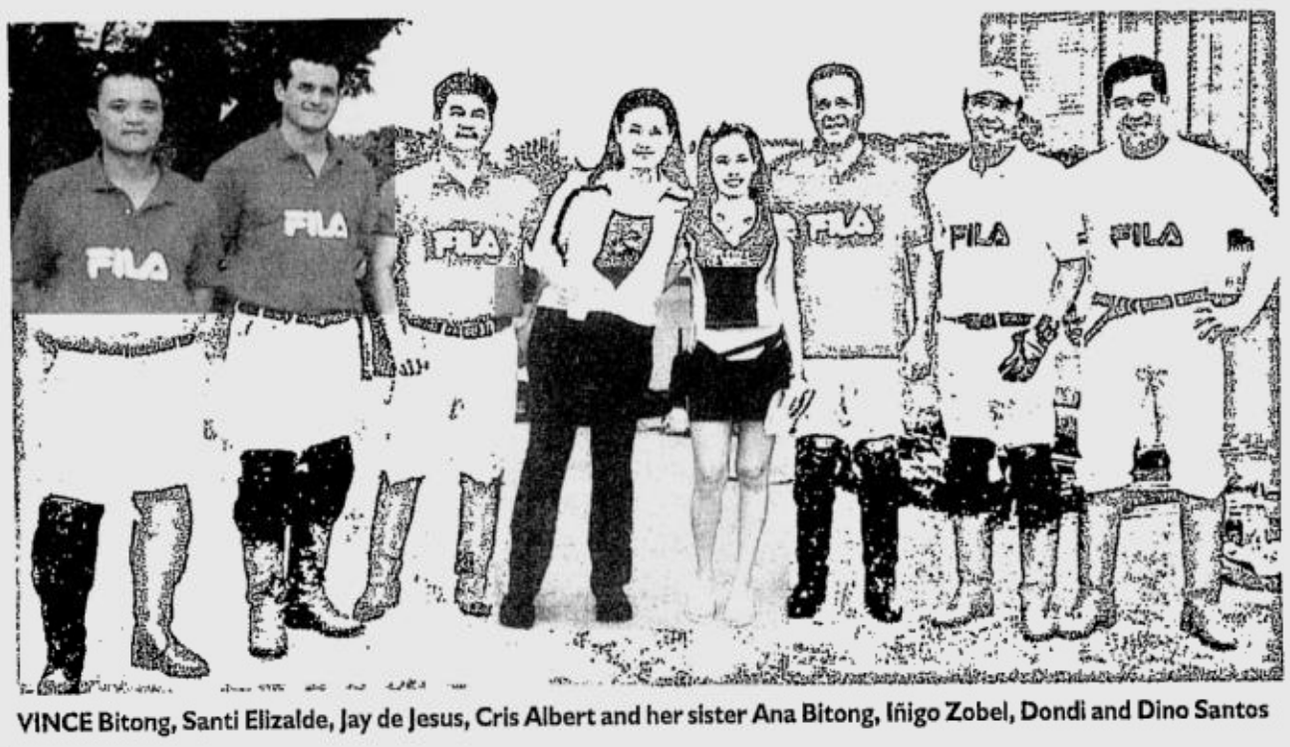
VIVACIOUS Mary Ann Gomez and son Nelsito Gomez

PCSO chair Serge Valencia and Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio

THE CULINARY experts behind the excellent dinner. Kathrina Kuhn, Arlene Arce (right) and society lady Suzanne Laudico

JING Espiritu with close pals Anette Ablan and man of all seasons Loule Cruz

GORGEOUS beauties Rachel Singson and Ching Cruz



VINCE Bitong, Santi Elizalde, Jay de Jesus, Cris Albert and her sister Ana Bitong, Iñigo Zobel, Dondi and Dino Santos

POLO watchers. Vince Bitong, Ace Suzuki, Dino Santos and Alfonso Marcos Araneta

TOP stage personalities. Miguel Faustmann and Pinky Amador

FORMER movie star Anna Marin and Arlene Ong

FRANCIS Manalo and vivaciously fun and avid photo-bug Christine Roxas Ferrer

BEAUTY queen and artist Evangeline Pascual with son, Jet Beltran

THE CONSTRUCTION magnate and the beauties. Gretchen Barretto, Philip Cruz, Jean Saburit and Cory Quirino

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system

IT IS said that polo is the sport for royals and the elite, *palanggas*, as it has been for eons.

One sunny, breezy afternoon, renowned sports lifestyle brand Fila held the second Polo Cup at the chi-chi Manila Polo Club, natch!

Hot male players hogged the field, but all eyes were on the only rose among the thorns—top equestrian-turned-polo player, sultry **Rosanna Yulo.**

Fila's style thrust and philosophy, "This is my life," couldn't have captured the passion more resoundingly.

As we dashed in, we were welcomed by the giant visuals of Fila's newest set of inspiring personalities.

Amid fab Ducati bikes was eye-catching Bianca Araneta, who was nothing short of hot, hot, hot! And what about those awesome Ferraris and Porsches? A big boy's dream toy, for sure, *palanggas*.

Among the car and bike enthusiasts were Bea Azcuna, daughter of Supreme Court Justice Adolf Azcuna, who was joined by Ducati bikers Abe Abesamis, Toti Alberto, Joy Alberto, Jose Beech, Koki Beech, Bobby Bonifacio, Joel Bretana, Gary Cantong, Woody Jose, Edwin Lee, Mel Lumagui, Joshua Macintosh, Jun Mariano, Andy Navarrette, Paulo Ortanez, Bobby Ozaeta, Robert Palomar, Ray Pascual, Noel Raymundo and Love-Love Teoseco.

Beautiful and smart Cris Albert, general manager and vice president of Sport Life, Fila distributor, was *tres* chic in her black and white Fila gear. "We always push Filipino talents and support Philippine sports. And we definitely provide them the opportunity to enhance and cultivate their skills," she said.

Hotshot polo watchers included Fila's big boss, **Butch Albert**; **Warner** and **Julie Manning** of the **Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corp.**; former sportsman **Dante Silverio**, fun **Carlo Evaristo**, **Joel Trinidad**, **Pinky Amador**, **Bianca Zobel**, banker **Ramon Sy**, and Prince of Jaipur's hot boss, **Mr. T. Max**, who hosted the yummy after-game polo cocktails. The overflowing booze was provided by the popular V Bar.

Afterward, there was the exhilarating presentation of Fila's wow Spring Summer 2005 Collection.

While the sun set, the polo field became a giant barbecue area, which included a roasted calf. The dinner was superbly catered by the Club's Makati Skyline.

The Fila Cup was organized by **Ana Bitong**, excellently hosted by my pal, **JR Isaac**, and directed by **Ren Zamora**. Also assisting in the tournament were Fila franchise holders, led by **Mert** and **Jo Manahan**, dahlings.

New spa

With all the stress affecting us, especially the unforgiving pollution and traffic, it isn't easy finding a solemn retreat where all of the stress can be blocked out, giving way to some much-needed chilling out.

Well, *palanggas*, there is the newly opened Metrowalk Spa, located at the trendy Metrowalk Mall along Julia Vargas Avenue in the Ortigas Center, for that one-stop destination in ultimate relaxation and stress-relief.

Owned by the stunningly gorgeous **Rachel "Che" Singson**, no less, the Metrowalk Spa unveiled its facilities to loads of hotshot guests and patrons. Snipping the ceremonial ribbon to officially open this Zen-filled center were Pasig City Mayor **Vicente Eusebio**, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office chair **Serge Valencia**, television personality **Cory Quirino**, who also hosted perfectly the event, **Gretchen Barretto**, plus the *tres* talented beauty queen **Evangeline Pascual**, *palanggas*.

While the ceremonial ribbon-cutting was being done, we were all handed beautiful live butterflies, which were released throughout the spa "to spread color and warmth." Mystical sounds like "The Musical Journey of a Tibetan Nomad" and soothing lights by Philip Santos Forsc Inc. provided the perfect background for meditation.

This spa masters the process of healing and revitalizing through special therapeutic foot spas and foot scrubs accompanied by an acupressure back massage to condition the overall balance of the body.

It also offers Swedish and shiatsu massages, aromatheraphy for the mind's clarity and relief, body bleaching and body polishing treatments with nourishing body scrubs and sea salt scrubs, body waxing and facial massages. Checking out the invitees, I spotted Pasig City councilor and basketball legend **Atoy Co**, super feminine beauties **Frannie Jacinto**, **Susan Campos**, **Daisy Romualdez**, **Arlene Ong**, **Tina Revilla-Valencia** on a rare night out, and media luminary **Toto Ferrer** with vivacious wife **Christine Roxas**.

Everyone agreed that the buffet dinner table was absolutely superb, catered by no less than the popular Cullier, headed by chef **Katrina Kuhn** and headturner **Arlene Arce**.

The Metrowalk Spa is open daily from noon to midnight, and I promise you a total feeling of peace and inner harmony. I should know, *palanggas*, it's exactly what I felt.

VIVA Las Vegas! Jag draws inspiration from the desert city of entertainment halls and casinos for its Summer 2005 line.

Wear the spirit of Las Vegas

WHAT'S hot, fresh and above all sexy in Summer 2005?

Jag Jeans traveled to Las Vegas, United States to get the answer.

For summer 2005, clothes should not try too hard, should travel easy but still look (and even more importantly, feel) good, and can go from daytime events to a motorcycle ride with your favorite guy.

Think washed but hardworking denims. Silhouettes are free and easy, with soft (but not pre-aged) finish, and sprinkled with features that make Vegas what it is—baby halters and gypsy prints, off-shoulder football jerseys and '70s motifs with vintage style.

Inspired by the light shows of the Fremont Street Experience, Neon Graveyard and recreations of the Eiffel Tower, Venice and Sphinx of Egypt, Jag Jeans Summer 2005 is all about high style, full-on color and in-your-face sass. (Think fluorescent color schemes, muscle tees and tiny tops.)

It is also about raging rivers, barren deserts and Nevada's Indian heritage.

Jag Jeans new collection was photographed at the H. Motel at 2205 Las Vegas Boulevard in Las Vegas, Nevada.

With celebrity photographer Craig de Cristo calling the shots, Jag Jeans created a stunning fashion pictorial with top American models and stylists.

Jag Jeans new collection is available at all SM Department Stores, Robinson's Malls, Isetann, Ever, Landmark, Alabang Town Center and Ayala Center Makati.

JAG rules clothes for summer should not try too hard, should travel easy but still look (and even more importantly, feel) good.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2075, Series of 2005

EDDIE Baddeo's summer colors /E2

UP, UP and away with the super heroes of Famous the Voyage Party

CAMEL jumping with Leah Puyat, Keren Pascual and Rajo Laurel

Flying high in Egypt

BEN CHAN, together with Darna wannabes Millet Mananquil and Mons Tantoco

SUPER Bench swooped into the cradle of Western civilization—Egypt—via the eclectic group of Filipino voyagers that made up Famous The Voyage Party 8.

Among those who cavorted in the desert sand in their Super Bench tees were designer Rajo Laurel, models Francis Ricafort, Corey Wills and Raya Mananquil, actor John Prats, Pineapple's Anton Barreto, Leah Puyat and Angelette Calero, Preview editor Pauline Suaco-Juan and her super cool mom Amelia, restaurateur Suzette Montinola and personal trainer Zimmerman, and the Philippine Star's Millet Mananquil and Mons Tantoco.

Grab a Super Bench tee and fly high like the Famous group. Super Bench is located at the ground floor level of Market! Market!

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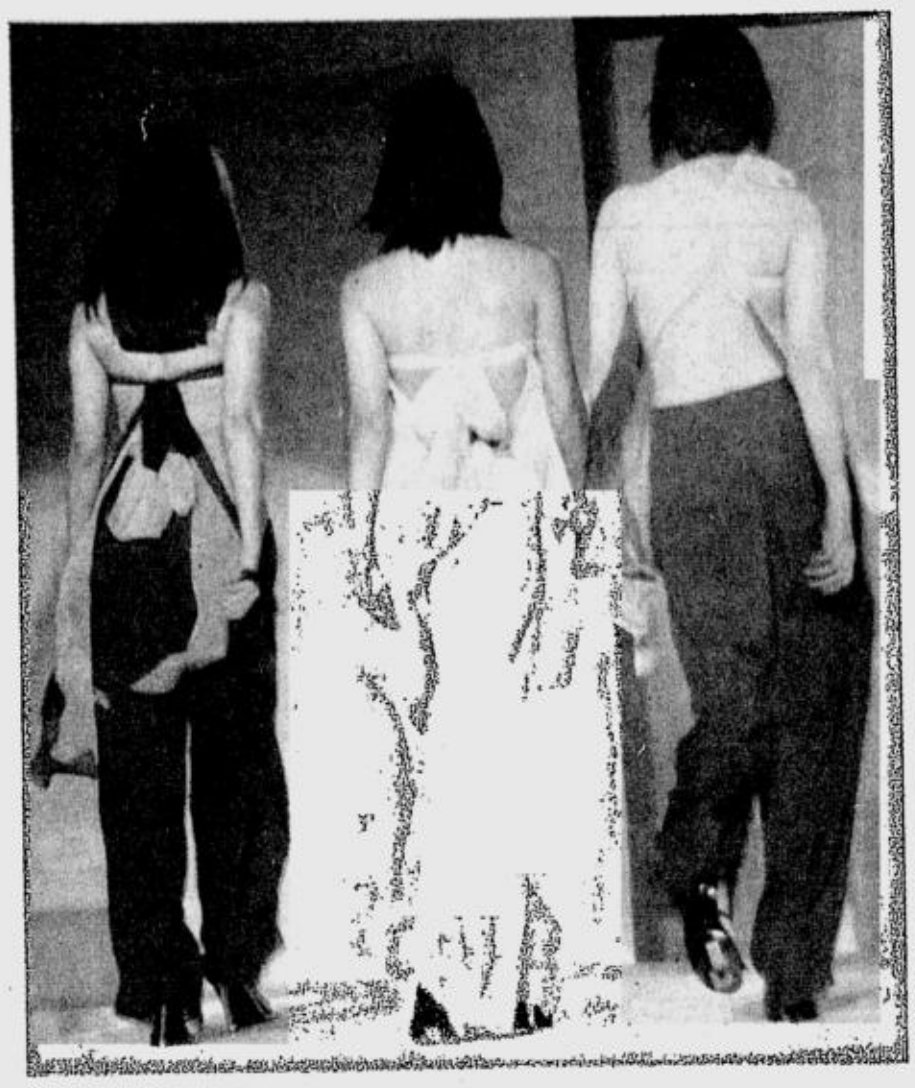

BEHIND-THE-SCENE details

STRAPLESS and layered look

Colors of Summer

FASHION designer Eddie Baddeo and seasoned mannequin Kuku Trinidad

IT'S SUMMER—time to bask in the sun, in things light, fresh, cool and colorful.

So for summer 2005, designer Eddie Baddeo creates confections that float and shimmer, and look as weightless as feather.

With loads of chic, the pieces are done in light-as-air chiffon fabric, layered into gorgeous strapless tops with geometric and uneven hems that spell freedom and ease.

Colors glimmer and glow. In Baddeo's summer palette, nature comes alive in hues ranging from the coolest pastels to the most vivid tints.

Allure a la Baddeo revisits the '80s, a time of sophistication when skin-revealing tops drew the eyes to dramatic, long full skirts layered and sheared in colors that evoked the freshest blooms of the season.

With Baddeo's colors of summer, everything becomes light, bright, colorful and sexy.

Baddeo's summer collection was presented recently at the Shangri-La Plaza Grand Atrium by Runway and Modeling Perfection (RAMP), headed by Kuku Trinidad. Image styling was by Eric Maningat and Sherwin Cervantes of Studio 546, and footwear was provided by Wilson shoes. Over-all direction was by Raymond Villanueva.

SOFT, flowing and multi-colored

Designer Eddie Baddeo creates confections that float and shimmer and look as weightless as feather

VARIATION of Baddeo's summer signature

OFF-SHOULDER blouse and lacy skirt

BLACK-AND-WHITE basics jazzed up with yellow green sash

MINI dress with ruched bustline and spaghetti straps

PHOTOS BY MANDY NAVASE

SPEEDO'S Spring/Summer 2005 collection

ALIYA in Sapphire Tankini set in Ottanio

FLORAL Halter Bikini set

PATCH Triangle Bikini from the Rosa Cha collection

Playful swimwear

AS summer reaches its peak, Speedo re-opens its flagship store at SM Megamall. It comes up with a fresh, new look and a wide selection of chic resort and swimwear one can choose from.

During the opening, models sashayed in Speedo's eye-catching Spring-Summer 2005 pieces—colorful bottoms in vibrant prints, sophisticated one-piece suits, playful tankinis and bandeaus.

Svelte model and soul singer Aliya Parcs graced the event, looking fabulous in her Speedo ensemble. Present during the ribbon-cutting was Chandru N. Mahtani, Speedo Phils. president.

TRIANGLE Bikini in China Red Colorway

SPEEDO Phils. president Chandru Mahtani and model/singer Aliya Parcs at the ribbon-cutting ceremony of Speedo's flagship store in SM Megamall

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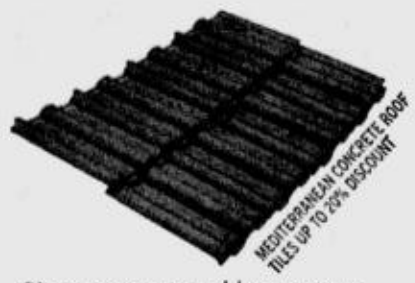

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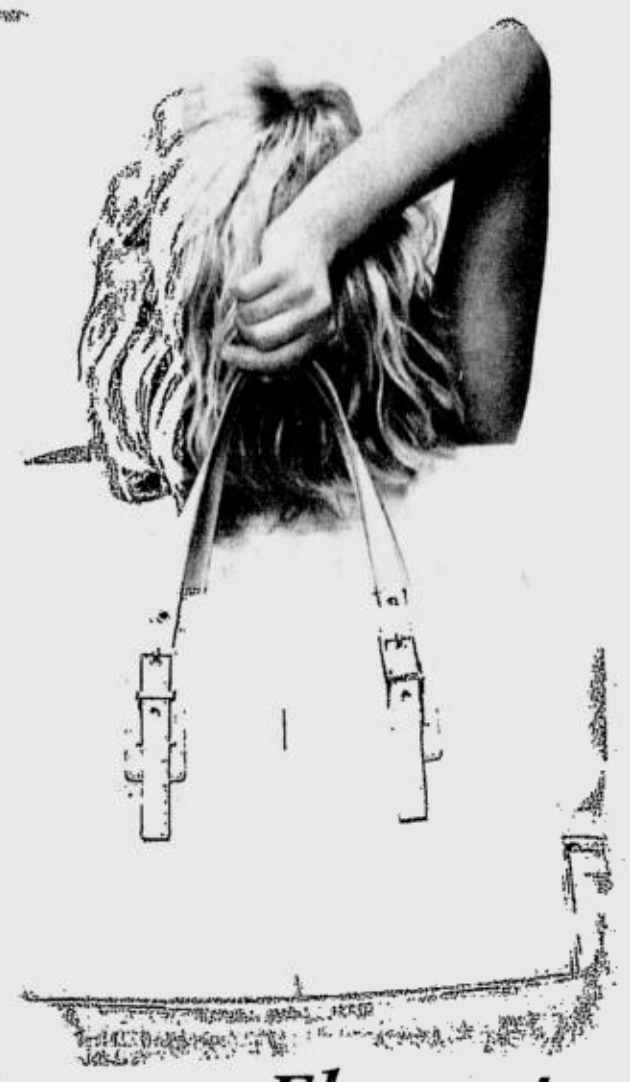


UNHINGED
Medium Tote

Elegant carry-alls

WOOD You Be Mine
Satchel in Tangerine

KENNETH Cole introduces the Block and Roll satchel. Fruity yellow and ultra-feminine, the bag is a blend of glazed leather and linen material with zip top closure and luggage handles. It is crafted with magnetic front and back side pockets plus a special cell-phone pocket.

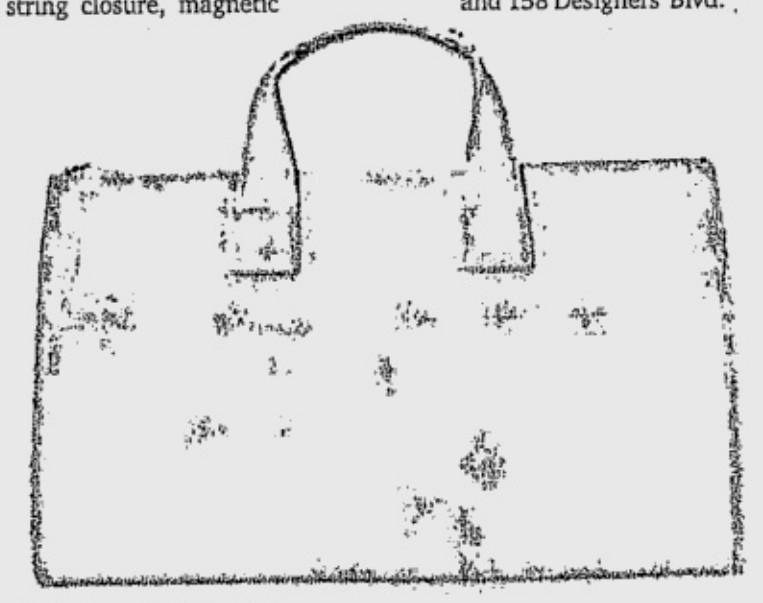
The Wood You Be Mine satchel is another eye candy with its tangerine suede material, zip top closure, cell-phone pocket and wooden handle.

Love It or Weave It, meanwhile, is made of rich Italian fabric and sports details like drawstring closure, magnetic snap, interior zipper side and exterior side gusset pocket.

The Word Play satchel is made of cool canvass and leather trim with magnetic snaps and drawstring closure. It also has two side exterior gusset pockets and an interior side cell-phone pocket.

Then there's the Unhinged Medium Tote, a pebble leather tote that allows more room for your stuff. The hinge hardware and contrast stitch add up to distinctly elegant design.

Kenneth Cole is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at The Power Plant Mall, Greenbelt 3, Rustan's Makati, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, and 158 Designers' Blvd.

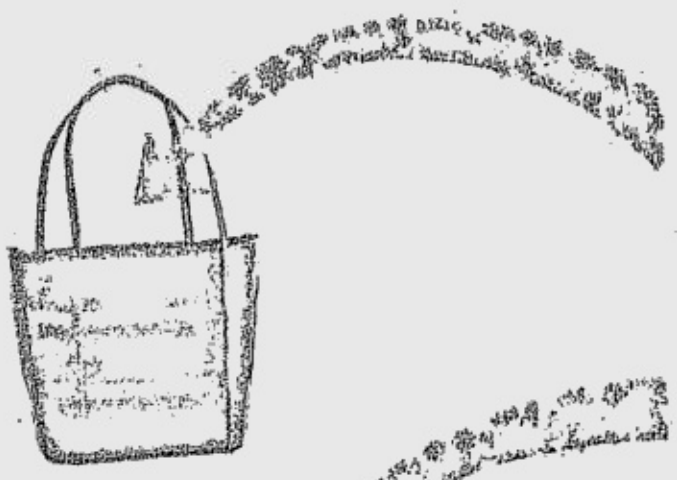


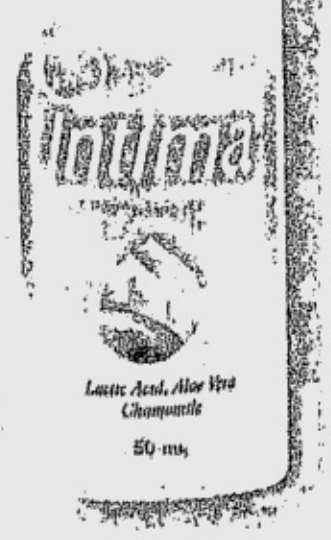
BLOCK and Roll Satchel

WORD PLAY Satchel

LOVE It or Weave It Satchel

Going out?
to work, school or anywhere





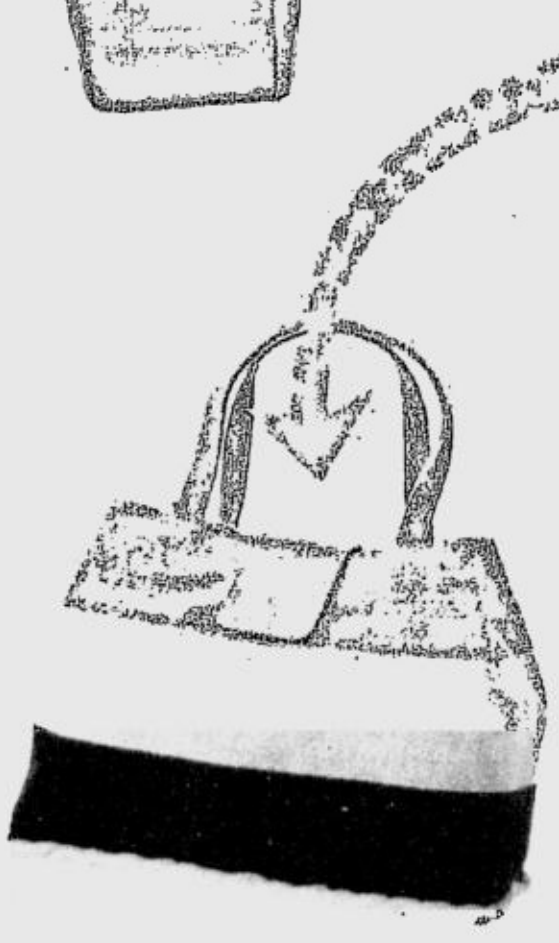


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ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Do you know what your kids are up to on this pleasure-ridden island? Master the art of invisibility

Boracay for parents

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

WE woke up Wednesday last week to a new Pope and rain in Boracay. It's been a tentative summer—neither too hot nor cool, and on our last day on the island, summer turned wet. A refreshing incessant downpour came on the first morning of **Pope Benedict XVI**'s papacy, trapping us in our room for some Vatican-watching in pleasure-ridden Boracay. Only in postmodern lifestyle!

It's fascinating to watch Boracay turn, by the day, into a citified island, its beachfront a colorful patchwork of gigs and demographics. But have no doubt about it, "Bora" or Boracay (accent on "bo," take note, since how you say it, our friend **Monchef** believes, denotes your age and status) is for and of the young, of either mind or body, or both. In short, don't expect to fully understand it.

As we wrote this, beside our cabana at Pearl of the Pacific stretched two rows of sun-baking teen bodies—his and hers—that, we overheard, were using SPF 70 (?) and gulping down banana-peanut-choco shake (when was chocolate added to banana/peanut?). You have to be nubile to try such lethal contradictions—toasting in the sun, yet using 70 (if there's such a thing), keeping your flat-board abs yet having banana, peanut, chocolate in one gulp.

We did Bora this summer because we wanted to be around when our kids "do" it—their ages ranging from 12-16, mine and my brother's family. All right, technically they're no longer kids, but in any parent's book, they are.

Parental fear

Which brings me to a topic where people haven't gone so far—what are parents thinking and fearing when their kids are in Boracay, the happening place which today knows no off-season, where things are so "cool" (kids' thesaurus) they cross over to the parent's definition of wild, where fashion means varying degrees of undress. Try getting into a dad's mind as his young girl struts on the beach in string bikini.

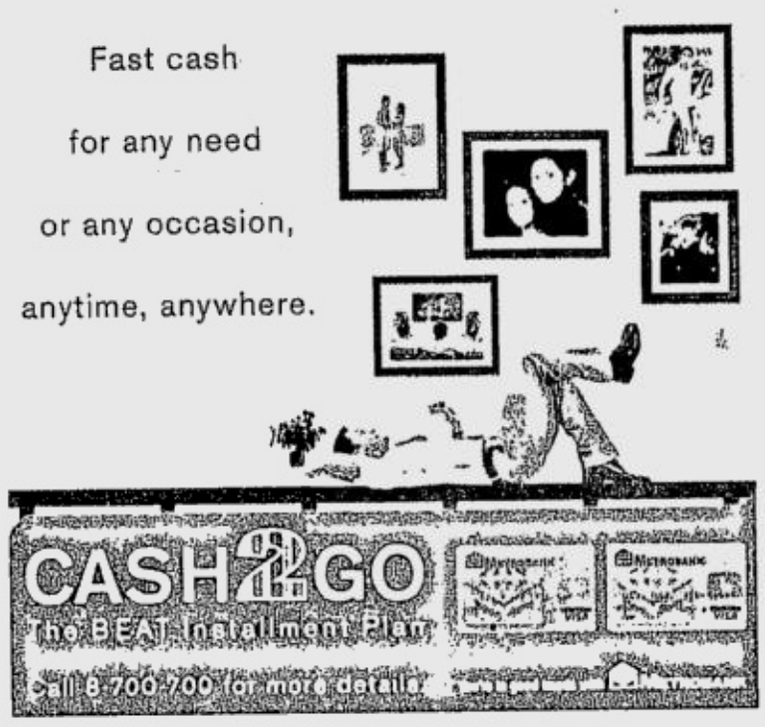
Indeed, how do you give your kids the enriching memories of adolescent summers in Boracay—without leaving them to self-destruct in excess? Is that possible at all? Or is it the mere paranoia of a control-freak parent? (Name me a parent who's neither paranoid nor a control freak.)

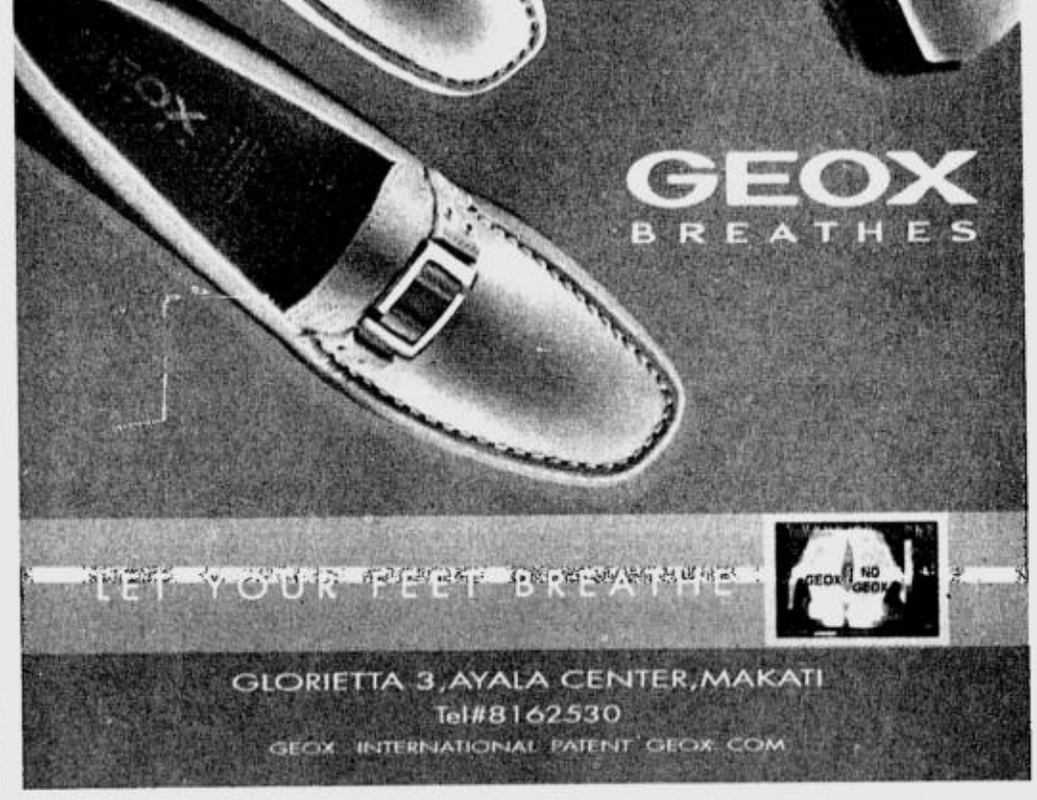
Since **Tim Yap** is too young to answer the above, and **Maurice Arcache** even younger, we try figuring it out ourselves, like rats in a lab experiment. Boracay lifestyle-shaker **Louie Cruz** gets a big laugh out of our itinerary on his island, "Haven't you noticed, when you head east, your kids go west?" Smart observation.

Of course, we have noticed. We do D'Mall, the kids stay at Coco Mangas or Joni's. In fact, parents have no choice. You must let your kids loose—on a short leash. (By the way, in case you haven't noticed, their Bora sked is in sync with that of their *barkada*, classmates, if not the entire school. They're all there together, running into each other on the beach, like they do at Greenbelt.)

We try to let them be—do the scene at Coco Mangas until the wee hours, try the *paraw* at sunrise, and so on. We work at being invisible. In the end, we gave Pearl's **Rita Sanson** what we believe is a wise suggestion: Why

BORACAY/ F3





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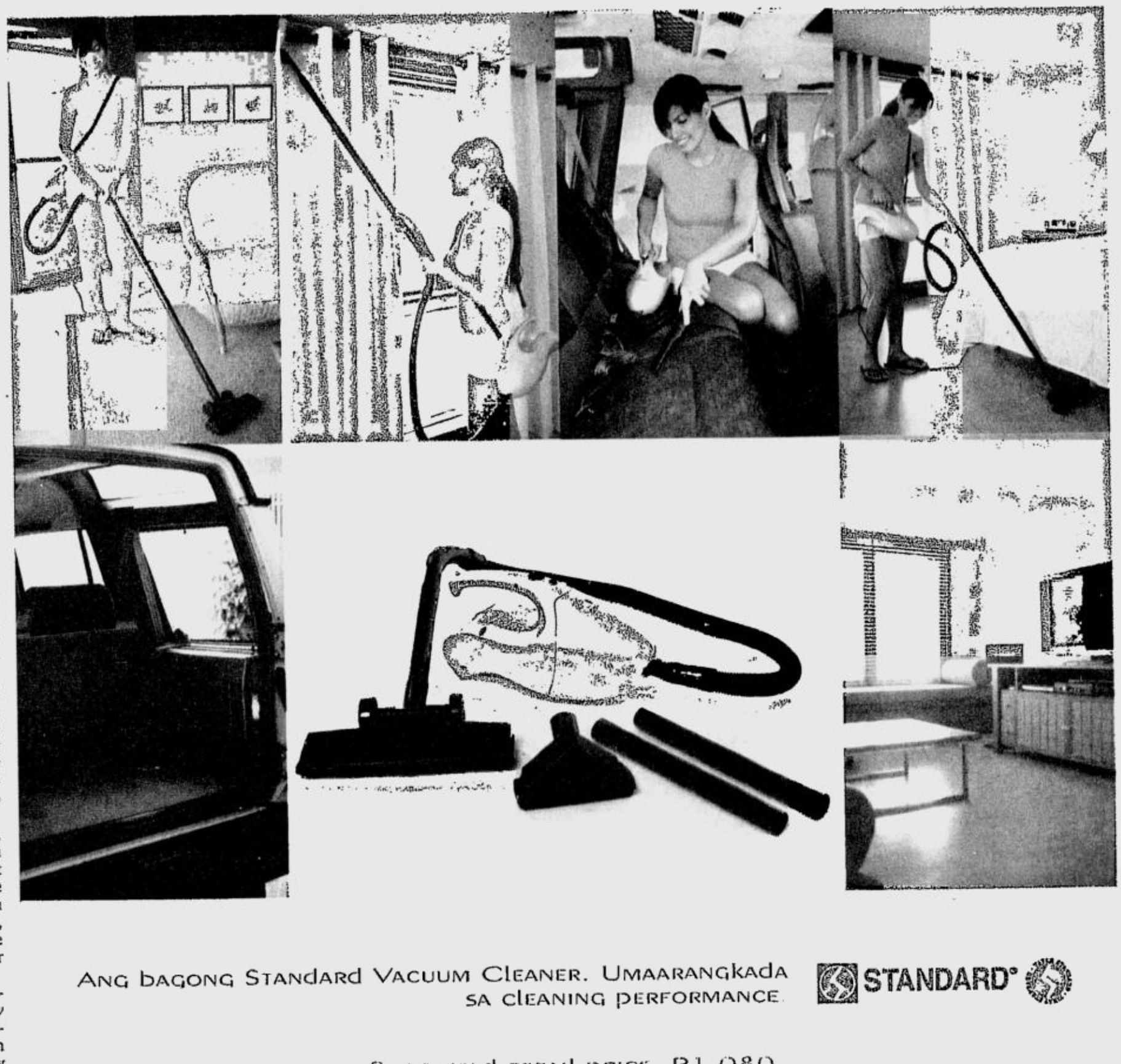

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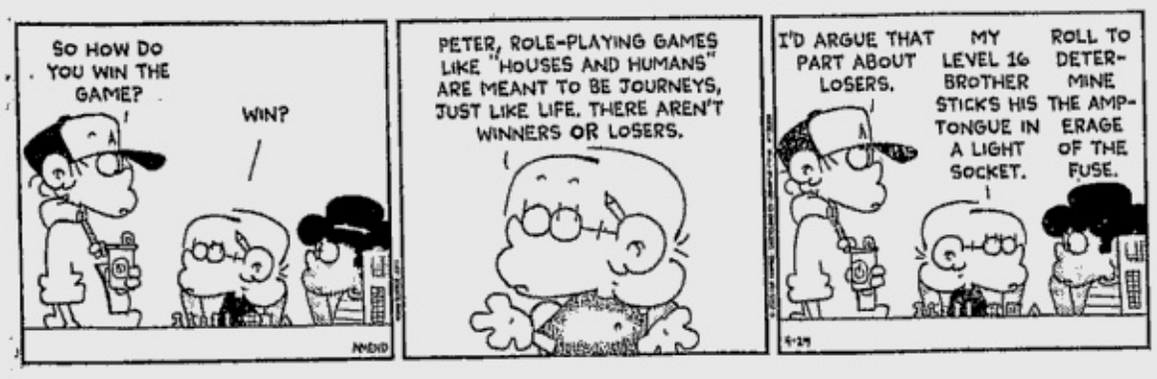

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LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're aware of your image. You are self-possessed and dignified. You have excellent social skills. You value the good opinion of others. You handle responsibilities well. You have an above-average interest in your wardrobe and your appearance because you want to look good! The year ahead is social, fun-loving and favors romance!
Birthdate of: Jerry Seinfeld, comedian; Uma Thurman, actress; Michelle Pfeiffer, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): It's easy to go overboard spending money on something luxurious today. Not that you can't have something luxurious, but you do want to be realistic, don't you? (Caution.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): One of two things can happen today: You might sever a relationship; or, on the other hand, you might completely idealize someone all out of proportion. So you're either madly in love or ending something.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be careful about defending political and religious arguments today. You might be going out on a limb. Perhaps it's best to remain quiet and wait until you're thinking more clearly.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): A friend might disappoint you today. However, you might have been expecting too much. Have you thought about this? There are two sides to every equation.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Relations with partners might be strained today. This doesn't have to be the case; they could be beautifully cozy! But unexpressed expectations could cause problems.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might make a decision at work today to stop dealing with someone. It's just more trouble than it's worth.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might be completely enraptured by someone. It's as if you have fallen totally head over heels in love. (You know who you are.) This same influence can make you very creative and artistic as well.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have high expectations of someone close to you now. Make sure you're being realistic. If you're off base, you will think that others are letting you down.

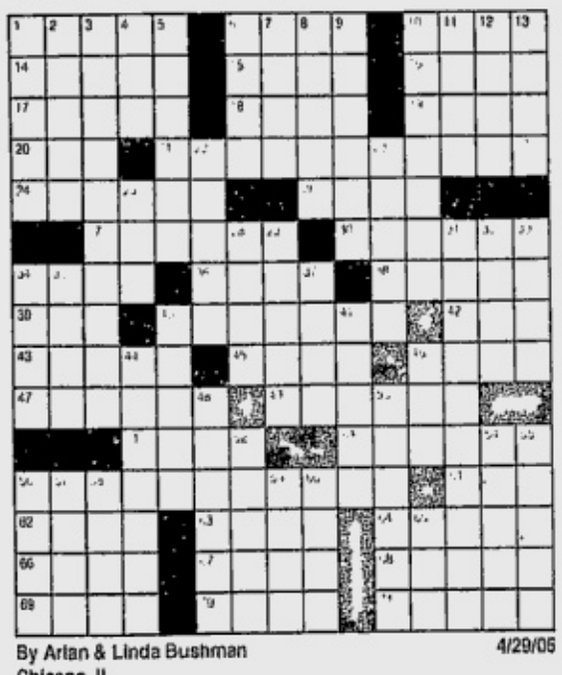
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Things go smoothly at work today; nevertheless, it's possible to be too optimistic about something. Unfortunately, sometimes wishing doesn't make it so.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might be quite taken with someone today. (We're talking a serious romantic crush.) Wait a little bit to see how things develop.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel sympathetic toward a family member today. You want to help if you can. In a few cases, some of you will feel you've done everything that you can, and now you're fed up.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel sympathetic for the misfortune of someone. (You have a kind heart.) If you can do anything to help, then do so. If you cannot help, let it go.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

4/29/05

ACROSS
1 Instruct
6 Leave out
10 Parrot
14 First designation
15 Screen
16 Spoil
17 Playful prank
18 BTU part
19 Alternative to Charles de Gaulle
20 Skater Midori
21 Mythic source of troubles
24 Strengthen, as metal
26 Pocket-sized
27 Collar
30 Knock it off!
34 Turn thumbs down
36 Sleuth Wolfe
38 Boredom
39 Esq. affixer
40 Contradiction in terms
42 NHL great Bobby
43 Heating apparatus
45 God of love
46 Champagne designation
47 Moves a jet
49 Business plus
51 At an end
53 Dark times
56 Autumnal occurrence
61 Ah, I see!
62 Natural balm
63 Dismantle
64 Venerable one
66 Pull (for)
67 Son of Seth
68 Fowl perch
69 Showy blooms, for short
70 Singer Lovett
71 Jazz section

DOWN
1 Implied
2 Please mightily
3 Courthouse surrender site
4 Fidel confidant
5 Valerie or Tess
6 Steer clear of
7 Benevolent
8 Linguistic quirk
9 British Egyptologist
10 Mountain shaper
11 Restrain
12 Hawaiian seaport
13 Cameo stone
22 Game setting
23 Tack on
25 In favor of
28 Evening in Roma
29 Tread heavily
31 Not by the book
32 Ashram figure
33 "Java" trumpeter
34 Expansive
35 Vocalist James
37 Olfactory prod
40 Miff
41 University of Maine town
44 Shrinking flowers?
46 Tom Hanks movie
48 Follow-up movie
50 Repairmen
52 Inclined to flow
54 The ones here
55 Arranges by category
56 Cultivate
57 Moises or Felipe of baseball
58 Tower (over)
59 False god
60 Prow
65 Mauna _ volcano

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

L	A	N	D	S		A	S	P	S		F	B	B	S
A	G	O	R	A		B	A	R	T		R	E	U	P
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F	R	E	E	F	I	T	S		I	N	T	H	E	
L	E	X			E	E	L			A	W	A	S	H
A	L	A	M	O	D	E		A	M	N	E	S	T	Y
W	Y	M	A	N			A	L	I			H	I	P
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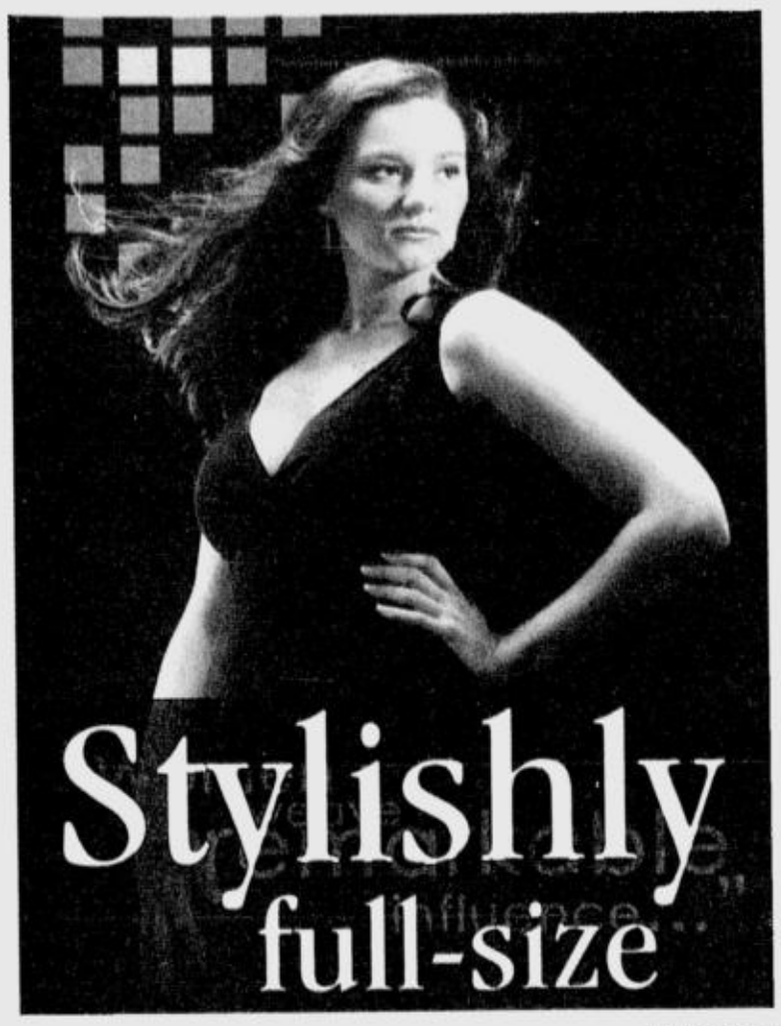


Stylishly full-size

BLACK girl

TUBBY, the store for plus-sized women, continues to offer clothes that complement busy and active lifestyles.

Among the many women who swear by Tubby's tastefully designed clothes is TV personality Ruby Rodriguez and award-winning broadcast journalist Jessica Soho.

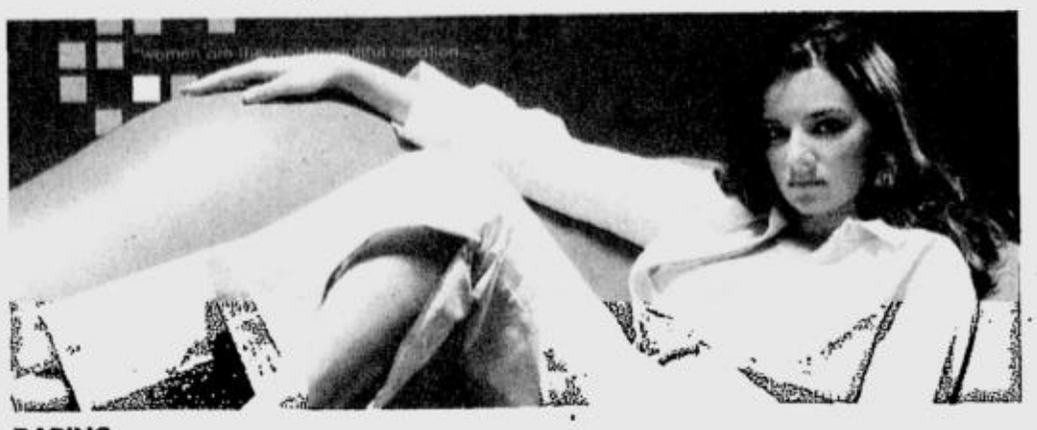
They join many plus-sized women around the world who have achieved a lot in their respective fields. Women like TV star Camryn Mannheim, queen of talk Oprah Winfrey and movie star Queen Latifah, to name a few, have earned their stripes regardless of their dress size.

"These women best exemplify what Tubby is all about," says Tubby creative director Jong See. "These ladies are driven and passionate in what they do and more importantly, never considered their being full-figured to be a hindrance in reaching their goals and satisfying their desire to feel and look good about themselves."

Tubby enjoys top-of-mind recognition among plus-sized consumers due to the styles of its clothes, which are updated each week, ensuring that customers get the freshest, most stylish designs all the time.

"We always keep a close eye on local and international trends and exercise customer interaction at all times," says See.

If you're a plus-sized lady on the lookout for stylish clothes that fit your body, check out Tubby stores at G/F SM City North Edsa; 2/L SM City Manila; 2/L Festival Supermall; G/F SM Southmall; G/F Robinsons Metro East; G/F SM City Pampanga Annex 1; 5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall; G/F Robinsons Place Manila; 2/L Ayala Center Cebu; G/F CSI The City Mall-Dagupan; 2/L CSI The City Mall-San Fernando, La Union; and now at 3/L Robinsons Galleria.



DARING

MOOD

BINNIE pinkie

HERO of the day

Boracay for parents

From page F1

doesn't Pearl set up a watch tower on the beachfront where a parent can perch and turn on the search light auto-beamed at Coco, Joni's, Pier One... you get the drift. We're pretty sure it would be a hit with parents and would be Pearl's competitive edge.

Since Rita isn't buying the above, unfortunately, at the end of Boracay summer, a parent can only realize the following "altruisms," with or without Louie's help:

- Wherever they are on the island, kids gravitate toward their old folks at mealtime.
- Let the kids enjoy, learn (sometimes the hard way). Let them be.
- As a parent, enjoy, learn. Let yourself be.
- Use a short leash, not a noose.
- If you can't be everywhere on the island, be invisible. (If that fails, sign on Louie Cruz as your "eye.").
- But be there.

On the boat as we were leaving the island, my kid turned to me, "Ma, can we do Boracay again next year?" He said "we," take note.

Trivia

Still on Bora, did you know that...

- The revered Jesuit **James Donelan** had a term for the hues of Boracay waters that wavered from blue to gray? He called the hues "Boracay rhapsody." Pearl's **Marilou Tirol Sanson** recalled the early years her family would spend on the island, with Jesuits such as Father Donelan as visitors. Boracay then was undiscovered, undeveloped so that vacationing landowners like the Tirols brought necessities such as potable water and, to say the Sunday Mass, their priest-friends.
- South Beach dieters can go on a "Boracay Beach Diet" at Pearl, with dishes such as baked tofu in teriyaki sauce, baked tuna or seafood kebab.
- According to **Freida Dario**, writing for Metro's Boracay special, the most common stolen item on the island are the Havaianas—"most common color to date, red," she wrote. We agree. We lost a pair.
- The beachfront still has the best pearl bargains—fresh water and South Sea. Find your own "*suki*" among Muslim vendors.
- Freida writes: "If you hear someone say 'MBM,' you know that high season has arrived ('*Maraming Bakla, Marami*')."

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COSMETIC SURGERY

When we talk about cosmetic surgery, things that come first in our minds are stars and celebrities that have undergone facelift, nose lift, breast enlargement, or liposuction. Oftentimes, the idea about it brings society condemnation, disapproval, and endless criticism. Contrary to these perceptions, cosmetic surgery was given birth not solely for glamorous and aesthetic purposes. Science found the light in cosmetic or plastic surgery to bring about hope to birth disfigurement and war caused deformities. Its noble purpose is to give hope for the unfortunate newborns to live normally and a new life for soldiers and war victims to restore their shattered faces and confidence.

Now, the concept on cosmetic surgery has been diversified. It is now being attributed to many things. Technology, social acceptance, awareness to various media outlets, and people of our new generation giving so much focus on health and fitness, led to the progression of wanting to look good and feel good at the same time. People have deemed cosmetic surgery is the answer to that.

What is Cosmetic Surgery?

Cosmetic Surgery is a subspecialty of medicine that focuses on the enhancement of appearance through surgical and medical techniques. It is specifically concerned with the maintaining of normal appearance, restoring it, or enhancing it beyond the average level toward some aesthetic ideal.

Things to consider before undergoing a surgery

Determine your purpose. Ask yourself why you want to have a plastic surgery. More then the aesthetic and even financial aspect of the treatment, do you think you are physically and emotionally prepared to accept a new you? Contemplate more and consider a lot of factors before surrendering yourself to the operating room.

Set realistic goals and expectation. Cosmetic surgery is not some sort of magical ritual or procedure. It is not some sort of spell that will fit the saying 'your wish is your surgeon's command'. Cosmetic surgery may be considered a spectacular medical aesthetic treatment but it also has its boundaries and limitations. Art and beauty as it may seem, still science called to it does not promise a perfect you. As defined earlier, cosmetic surgery is more confined on enhancement or restoration rather than change or transformation.

On finding the right surgeon. The criteria on finding the right if not, the best surgeon should be high and tough. We must be very careful in this particular category for in your decision lies the destiny of your face or your body. It is a matter of not life and death but rather, of beauty and madness. Special skill and knowledge are essential in the practice of plastic surgery. Basic requirement is that your surgeon should be a certified and licensed physician. Competency in the following fields like anatomy, physiology, pathology, and basic sciences are also plus factors. Your surgeon should also have subspecialty and knowledge in all contributing disciplines like facial plastic surgery, general surgery, and dermatology. In fact, international medical institutions are now giving emphasis on formally introducing a new branch of skin science called "dermatological cosmetic surgery". All in all, competency in cosmetic surgery implies a combination of knowledge, surgical judgment, technical expertise and ethics in order to achieve the goal of providing aesthetic improvement.

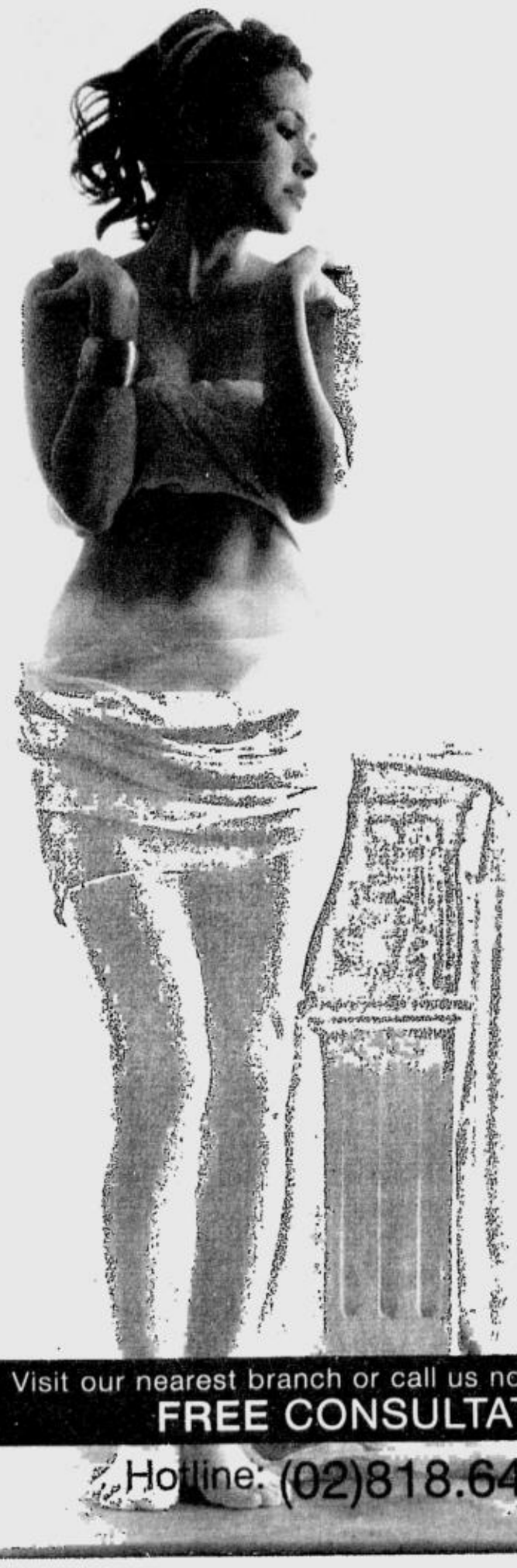
While cosmetic surgery is an immensely positive experience for many people, we should know that there are advantages and disadvantages that may lie ahead. With the growing acceptance and openness to cosmetic surgery, it is also essential that we identify our purpose and not lose sight on the history of how it should be used.

Dermclinic, one of the most trusted dermatological clinics in the country offers Professional Cosmetic Surgery services done by its league of true skin experts. Its line-up of certified dermatologists and competent surgeons commit itself to providing the best medical aesthetic procedures like artists who are passionate to accomplish a masterpiece.

To help you know more about the procedure or service you are interested in, it would be best to discuss with the doctor/surgeon your needs and expectations. Call or visit Dermclinic's nearest branch now for a **FREE CONSULTATION** or contact their hotline through **818-6477** for inquiries.

About Dermclinic

Dr. Vinson B. Pineda, a well - respected and internationally recognized dermatologist established Dermclinic more than 30 years ago and is now considered as an institution which has mastered the art and science of skin health and wellness. In fact Dermclinic, has been the learning ground of some notable dermatologists in town today.



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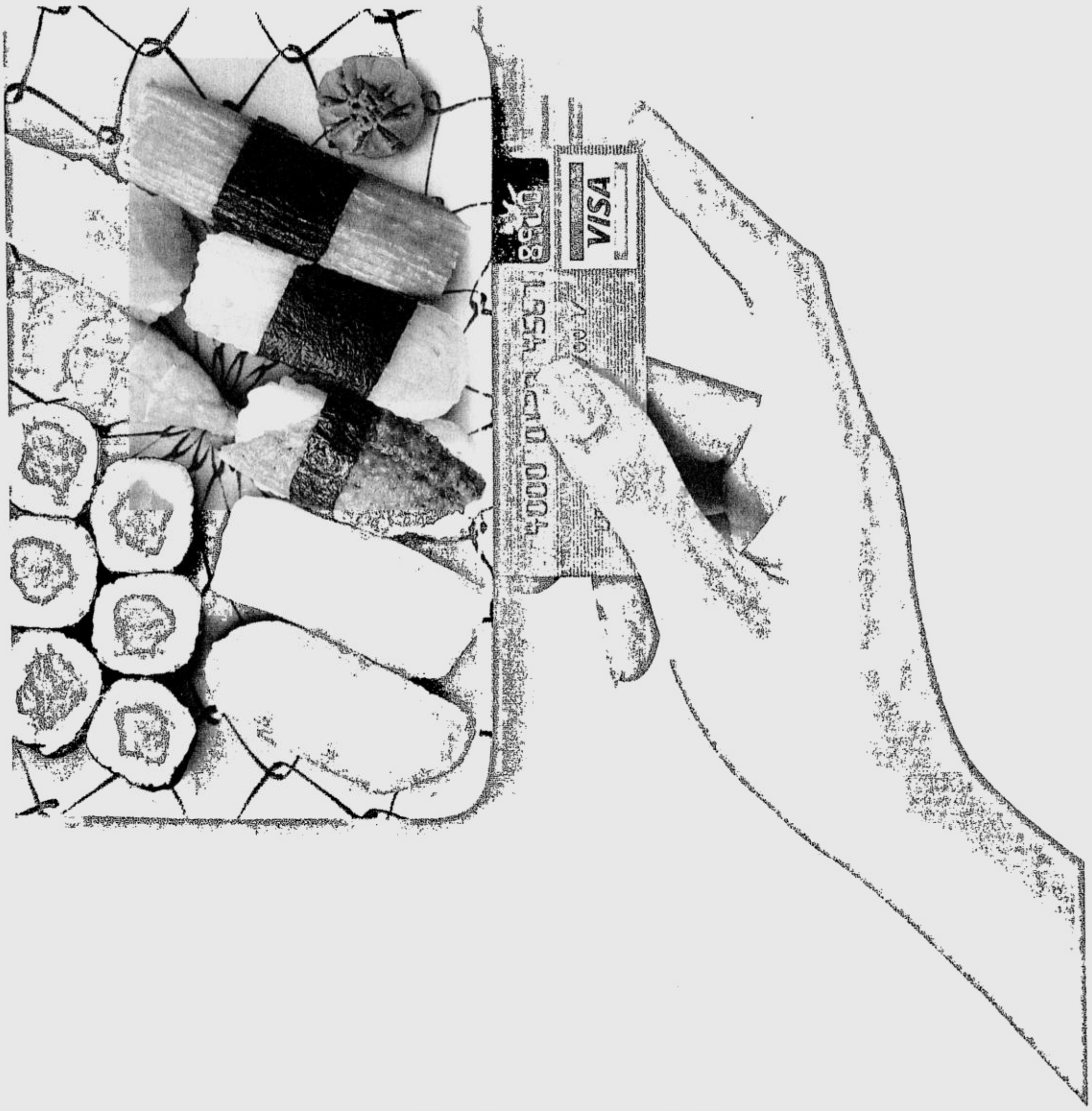


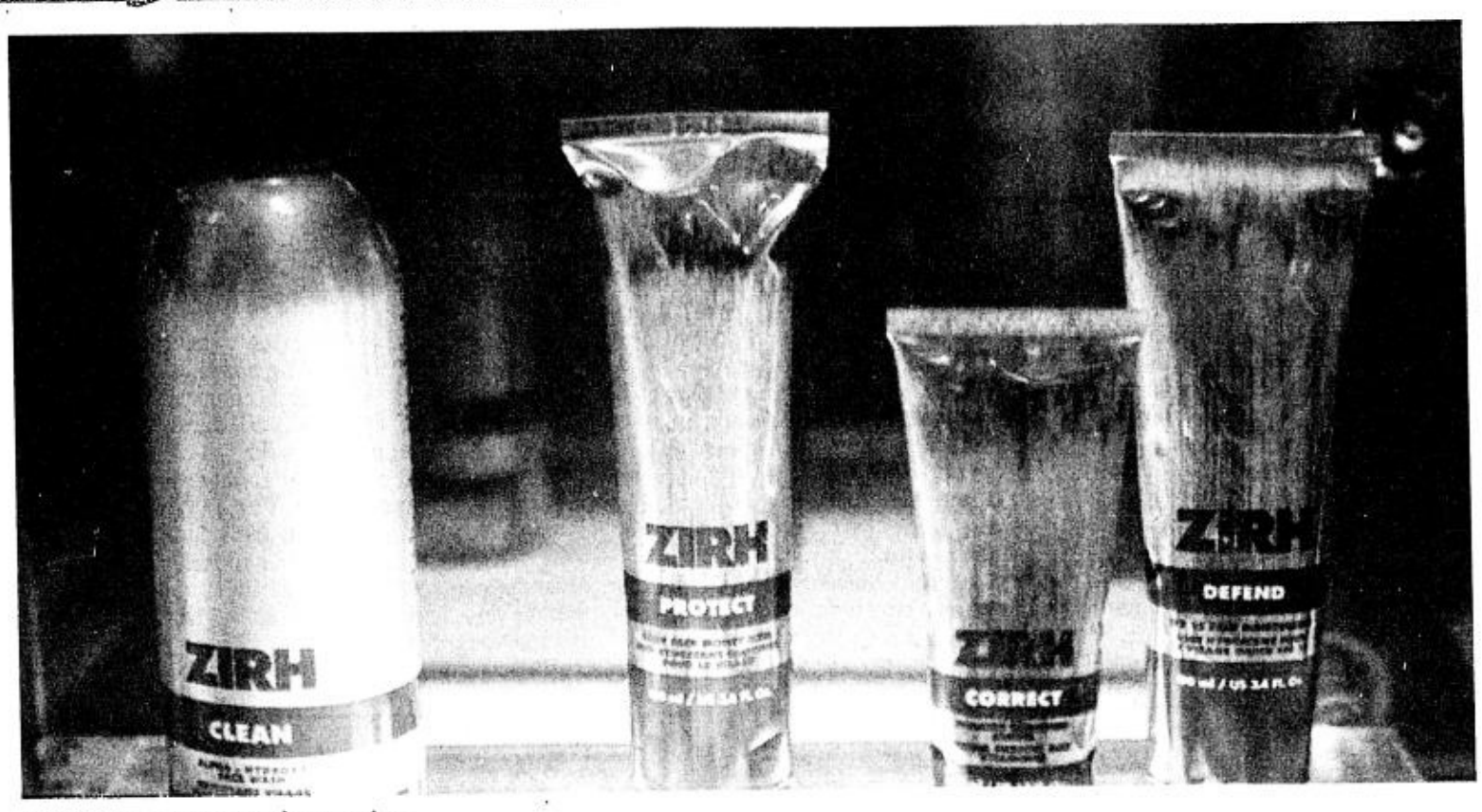
Dining out?

VISA

All it takes.

Men's skin care with lots of caring

Zirh from Shisheido develops a simple technique to shield men's skin from the ravages of time and the elements



ZIRH's easy steps to men's grooming

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Ryan Lim

NOT only do men need stronger skin-care products to cushion the harsh effects of sun and sea, they also require different formulations to deal with specific concerns that the best cleansers, astringents and moisturizers meant for women can't address.

"Men's needs are different," says Frederic Forsans, director of F&P Asia Ltd., exclusive distributor of Zirh products in the region. "For one, their skin is generally oilier and not as soft and as delicate as women's."

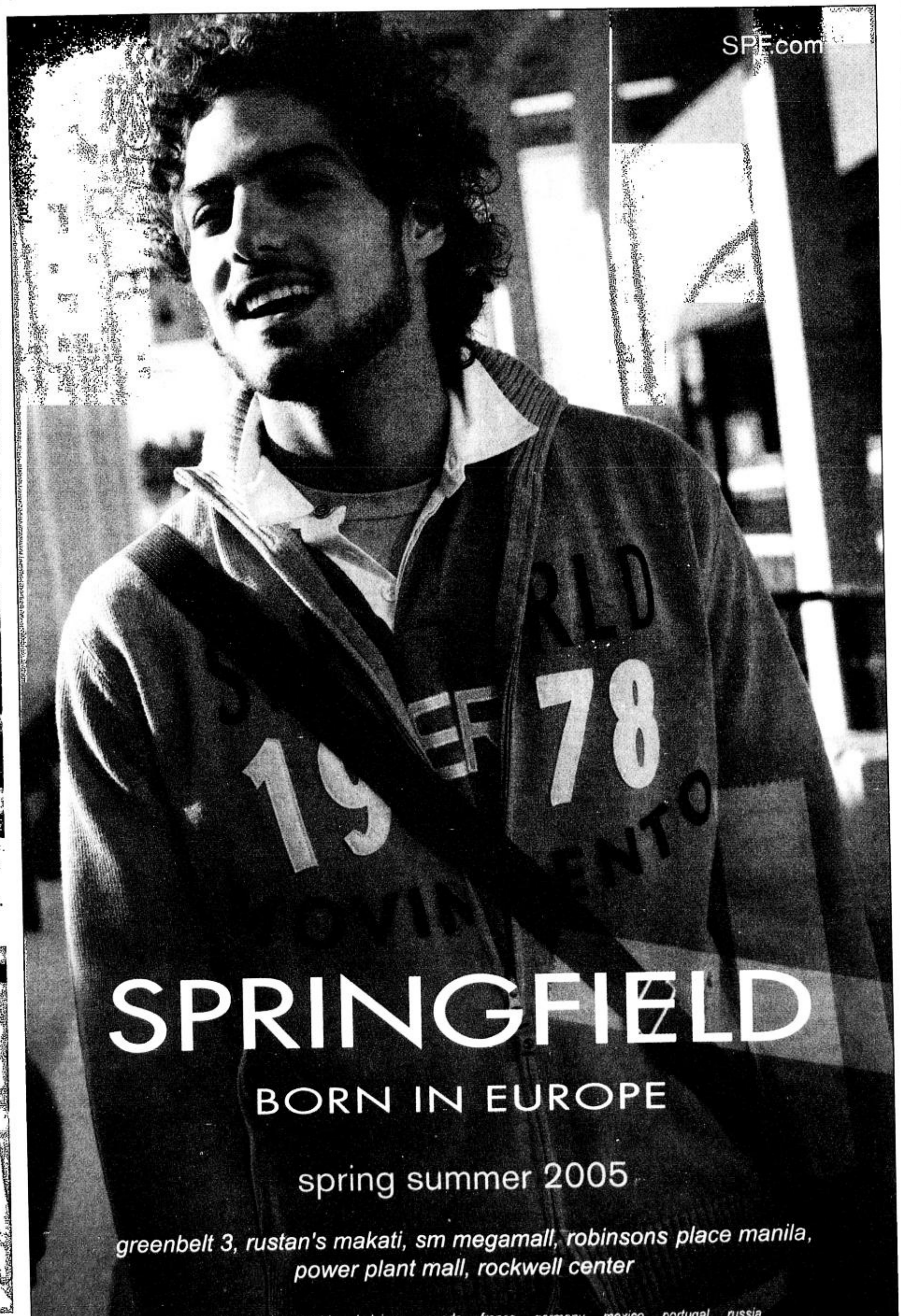
Developed and marketed by Shiseido, Zirh is a high-end line that aims to exclusively address men's skin-care concerns. This early, the brand ranks third in terms of sales to market leaders Aramis and Clarins in the United States.

Part of Zirh's success, says Forsans, is its ability to effectively target a wide range of men's skin-care needs sans complicated steps for its users. Despite the marketing hype prevalent among beauty products for women,

MEN'S/ G4

FREDERIC Forsans, director of F&P Asia Ltd.

ANNA Flores, product manager of Zirh in the Philippines



Tanned and gorgeous

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

MY CONTEMPORARIES have embraced the tanned skin rage, and I've just discovered why. Men, as well as some women, find tan lines on the opposite sex drool-worthy. It's like being privy to seeing something private, because it indicates something that used to be covered.

Getting a tan is the quickest way to give the illusion of losing 10 pounds all over. Hollywood actresses usually hit the tanning booth to prepare for a nude scene, as it shaves off the 10 pounds that TV or the silver screen adds to one's frame.

Skin imperfections are camouflaged as well. The dreaded cellulite disappears or improves in appearance a good 50 percent, depending on the severity. The shadows provided give the illusion of thinner thighs, a smaller bottom and fitter abs.

Skin discolorations, bruises, scars and red veins are cloaked, giving the impression of perfectly even skin. The principle works like clothes: Black is slimming, while white enlarges.

QuicktanTM is a term coined for The Belo Medical Group by Troy Montero, and is a perfectly safe and FDA-approved procedure (though it's not applicable for pregnant women). Unlike the sun or tanning beds that will burn the skin, give unpredictable results and age us prematurely, this spray tanning method ensures safe, even color all over.

The active ingredient, Dihyoxyacetone (DHA), is a colorless sugar that interacts with the proteins and amino acids on the outer layer of our skin to produce a golden brown color. It also contains a bronzing solution that prevents the usual fake tanning disasters such as orange tones, a gray cast, and dark nails and palms.

Since the clinic staff will be the one doing the spray tanning, they can ensure even coloring on every square inch and avoid areas that are already darker, like knees, elbows and underarms.

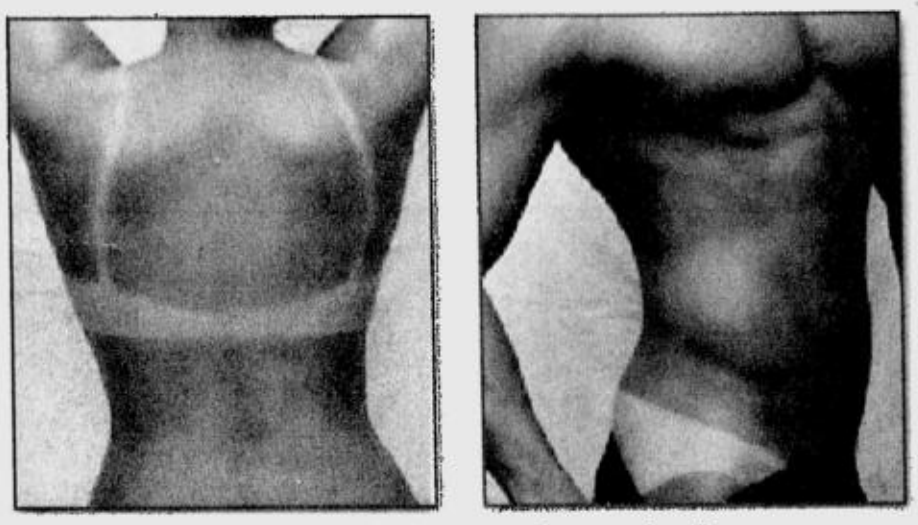
Preparation

Prior to being tanned, you should exfoliate using a body scrub or brush to take out the dry dead skin or the pigment that may cluster in those areas, giving you a patchy or streaky look. The clinic offers a body scrub service at the Tektite clinic, but it will cost extra.

If, however, you have never done a body scrub on yourself, it's better to have them do it the first time to ensure thoroughness. Do not moisturize after the scrub, because it will act as a barrier to the skin and the color won't hold.

Bring a dark-colored shirt you can wear after the procedure so it won't get stained. Do not shower till 10 hours after to make the color set in. Bear in mind that the color will still darken as time progresses, and the real color will emerge the next day.

Do not expect to get the perfect color when you leave, so don't keep telling the aestheticians to add more. You may be in for a shock the next day!



QUICKTAN's spray tanning method ensures safe, even color all over.

Maintenance

Come back after two to three days for the touch-up. This time, no body scrub is required. Your tan will last at least a week, depending on how you take care of it.

Do not exfoliate or use soaps that are too drying. I found that shower gels with room temperature bathing water, followed by body butters/creams for moisturizing, make the tan last longer.

Too hot water or long baths will cause one to peel and speed up fading. It will fade evenly like the tan from the sun.

This service is exclusive to the Tektite branch of Belomed at Ortigas.

E-mail the author at kinnysalas @yahoo.com

All the protection you need

AFTER exposure to the sun, reinvigorate, moisturize and soothe your skin with Guinot's After Sun Recovery.

A GOLDEN complexion may be a surefire headturner, but there are a few ground rules to remember before you lie under the sun in search of that glorious tan.

Though there is no such thing as a "safe" tan, you can make the process less stressful to your skin. In fact, your getting a tan actually means your skin has suffered some damage. Going out in the sun unprotected will result in early wrinkles, a nasty and painful sunburn or even skin cancer.

The best protection for your skin is proper sunscreen like Guinot's Ultra UV Sunscreen. A sunscreen and tanner in one, it offers triple protection from the sun and can be used for the face and body. It reduces the damage of tanning by bronzing your skin gradually while under the sun.

With SPF 30, it provides more defense against the sun's damaging ultraviolet (UV) rays.

Use Guinot's Pigmentation Mark Prevention Cream before exposure to the sun. While skin aging is natural, too much sun hastens the process. Prevent wrinkles and fine lines by using Anti Wrinkle Sunscreen to quicken your tan and keep your face looking youthful.

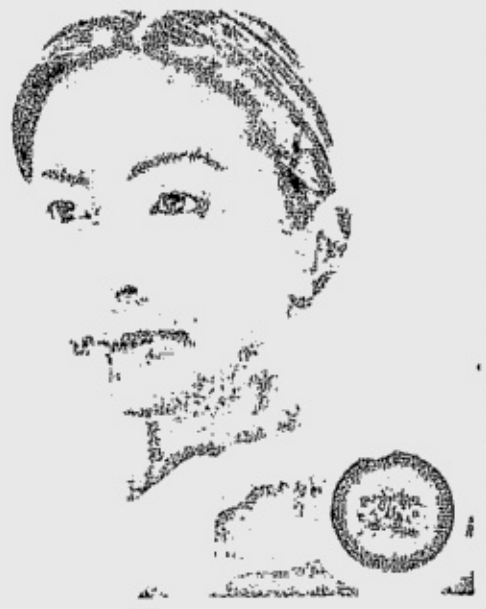
Guinot will also help you get the "no-streak," even tan similar to the airbrushing technique in salons. Guinot's Spray Plaisir Soleil SPF 15 provides increased tanning and sun protection, and promotes balanced tanning through balanced dispersion on the skin of sprayed active ingredients.

After prolonged exposure to the sun, soothe your skin with Guinot's Before and After Sun Vital Face Care and After Sun Recovery. The rich, moisturizing after-sun products offer optimum hydration.

GUINOT'S Spray Bronze Oil-free Sunscreen helps achieve a golden brown complexion without the greasy feel.

Get a tanning kit with the trio of Protective Tanning Lotion, Anti-wrinkle Sunscreen and After Sun Recovery for complete protection for your skin.

Guinot is the premier skincare institute in Paris, France. Its Nucleic Defense sun care system is the first DNA-based complex providing exceptional protection and nourishment to keep the skin vibrant, healthy and youthful. Its line of products includes very high sun protection, self-tanning creams, before and after sun complex, and suntan deepeners.



PROTECT your skin from the harmful effects of the sun while leaving it silky soft with Guinot Longue vie Soleil cream.

Guinot's Immuno-Bronzage product line strengthens the skin's defense against UV rays as it helps desensitize sun-reactive skin. Its sun care products range from anti-UV facial sticks, high protection sunscreens, moisturizing sun sprays, pigment mark preventing creams, self tanners, after sun lotions and face creams.

Guinot products are exclusively distributed by Guinot skin care centers at G/F 6750 Retail Arcade, Makati (8193952), and 5/F Wellness Zone Edsa Shangri-La Mall (6354538/6350357).

Fresh face, silky hair

TWENTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD Raquel Denise Misa is the new image model of Pantene.

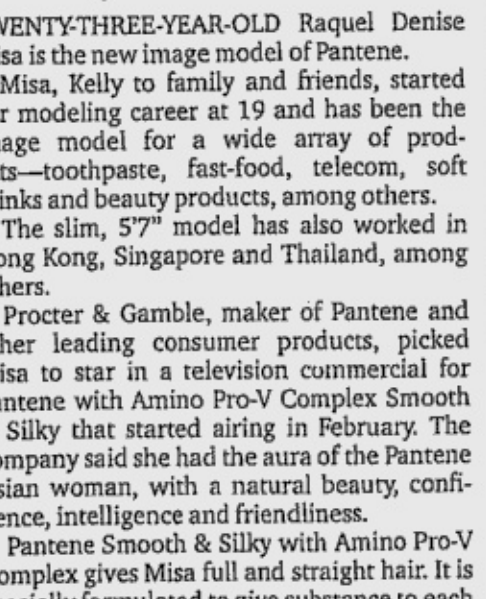
Misa, Kelly to family and friends, started her modeling career at 19 and has been the image model for a wide array of products—toothpaste, fast-food, telecom, soft drinks and beauty products, among others.

The slim, 5'7" model has also worked in Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand, among others.

Procter & Gamble, maker of Pantene and other leading consumer products, picked Misa to star in a television commercial for Pantene with Amino Pro-V Complex Smooth & Silky that started airing in February. The company said she had the aura of the Pantene Asian woman, with a natural beauty, confidence, intelligence and friendliness.

Pantene Smooth & Silky with Amino Pro-V Complex gives Misa full and straight hair. It is specially formulated to give substance to each hair strand and help transform flat-looking hair into full and straight hair that bounces with body and shine.

Misa uses the product to keep her hair healthy, especially since she loves the outdoors. Consistently on the dean's list at the De La Salle University, Misa has a Bachelor of Arts degree major in organizational communication. She plans to take up a graphic design course in Australia as a second degree, or try psychology.



KELLY Misa

Celebrate summer the New Age way

EASTWOOD City gathers the best psychics in the country for the Manghuhula Festival today until May 5. Charms, crystals and books will be sold at Psychic Festival grounds. Call 6876770 to 74 or 0917-8-EWCITY.

CONTEST. The Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation invites photographers who are members of camera clubs affiliated with a federation to join its contest starting today until May 1. The Hundred Islands is the subject of the competition. Call 8435341/ 8137420.

PROMO. Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila celebrates Secretaries Week until today. When you bring your secretary to Market Cafe, the hotel will reward her with a gift certificate. On her next visit to the restaurant, your secretary will dine for free. Call 2451234.

CONCERT. Paco Park Presents features guitarist Ferdie Medina and flutist Dan Dexter Mejico Alvarez tonight at 6. Admission is free.

ANNIVERSARY. The Brick Road anniversary celebration tomorrow will feature the grand finals of the Sing & Feel Like a Star Search for the ultimate impersonator. There will also be a fashion show featuring the Sexy Body and Generation East models, with performances from the Raging Divas and Figure 8. The Brick Road is located at the East Wing Open Carpark of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall.

SALE. Indulge in summer shopping while enjoying great discounts until tomorrow at Power Plant Mall at Rockwell. Participating outlets include Bass, Bufini, Chocolate Clothing Co., cK Underwear, K & Company, Tyler, Marithé François Girbaud, Jessica, Mosaic Women, Croco Kids, Orange Juice, Philippe Charriol and Officine.

BAZAAR. Lifestyle Bazaar will be held tomorrow and on May 1 at Le Pavillion Tent, Roxas Boulevard. Open from 9 a.m.-7 p.m., the bazaar will offer deli treats. Local and international credit cards are accepted.

MUSICAL. Concert at the Park opens its May Sizzlers with a back-to-back concert of Mint Band and Poetic Sparks on May 1, 6 p.m. Venue is the Rizal Park open-air auditorium, Manila. Admission is free.

PROMO. Hanford gives away imported sunglasses for every P500 worth of purchase as part of its summer promo. Available in 10 designs, the sunglasses are available in leading department stores in Metro Manila until May 15 or until supplies last.

GOINGS ON

Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation will hold an art seminar for children on May 17-20, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. Call 8435341/ 8137420.

PROGRAM. The Children's House International Nursery School, Inc. (CHINS) offers an edutainment summer program for children ages 3-12. Offered until May 20, CHINS conducts different activities at its center located at Pearl Drive, Pasig City. Call 6350093/ 0920-5144959.

SEARCH. The St. Joseph's Academy-La Consolacion College Alumni Association of Caloocan has launched its search for Outstanding Alumni. Awarding will be held during the Alumni Homecoming on May 21, 2 p.m., at LCC Campus. Call 9338723/ 9316111/ 3618557/ 3649248.

WORKSHOPS. Star Group of Malls holds summer sports workshops until May 31 at MySpa Wellness and Fitness Center, located at the 2nd level of Starmall Las Piñas. The workshops, which include taekwondo, badminton, hip hop craze dance, are for kids 5-12 years old. Call 8748804/ 8748802.

EXPO. Expect revolutionary innovations like Wi-Fi, 3G and mobile entertainment as the leading players in the Information, Communication and Broadcast Technology gather at CommunicAsia 2005 and BroadcastAsia 2005 at Singapore Expo on June 14-17. In conjunction with the sessions are trade shows of top-of-the-line technology of over 1,500 companies including the Philippines. Registration is until the first week of June. Log on to http://www.communicasia.com and http://www.broadcastasia.com.

PROGRAM. The Japan Foundation Manila announces the 2005 Secondary-School Educators' Group Tours Program to be held in Tokyo and adjacent cities on June 22-July 5. This is intended to provide opportunities for secondary-school Social Studies teachers in various localities throughout the country to observe and understand first-hand the educational system, culture and society of Japan. Call 8116155.

PROMO. The three-year warranty promo for Sony Cybershot and Sony Handycam has been extended up to June 30. Those who avail of the promo will also receive gift certificates worth P1,000-P5,000 depending on the purchase. The three-year warranty extension is offered in all branches of AVSurfer, Avid Sony Shop and Best Brands nationwide. Call 8431541 to 48.

BOOK FAIR. The Association of Booksellers for the Academe and the Professions will hold the 9th Philippine Academic Bookfair on July 11-15 at PTA Tent-Clamshell 2, Intramuros. Call 9279858.

BON VOYAGE, PATRICE!
Fashion designer Patrice Ramos-Diaz (seated, second from right) is feted by friends at a farewell party at the Pasig residence of Cecile and Jeroen van Straten. The designer, with her three boys, will leave for Shanghai soon to join husband Jay, a finance executive for Liwayway Corp. Apart from offering Shanghai's brides with mid-range bridal wear, Ramos-Diaz, who's been designing clothes for eight years now, will still run a boutique in Manila, which she will share with colleague Yvonne Quisumbing. Also in photo are (seated, from left) Inno Sotto, Jan van Straten, Lulu Tan Gan, (standing) Rhett Eala, Jude Mancuyas, Dennis Lustico, Jeroen, Patrick Rosas, Michael Salientes and Melvin Mojica.

31st Anniversary Sale-abration
CASH & CARRY SUPERMARKET
From April 29 to May 18, 2005
Super Value Sale also happening at
MAKATI Supermart ALABANG
Theater Drive cor. Commerce Ave., Alabang Town Center, Alabang-Zapote Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tels. 850-7687 • 807-2208 • Store Hours: 9:30 am - 8:30 pm
UniMart
Greenhills Shopping Center
Tels. 721-05-92 • 721-06-12 • Store hours: 9:30 am - 8:00 pm
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2349, series of 2005
CASH & CARRY SUPERMARKET
Buendia cor. South Superhighway
Tels. 844-7386 • 843-7382 • 843-3469
• Store hours: 9:30 am - 8:30 pm
Don Simon
Wine Red/White
75cl ₱117.50/bot
The Chainmart
Ox Tongue
₱115.50/Kg
Native Pechay ₱24.20/kg • Eggplant ₱18.90/kg •
Upo Large ₱10.50/ea • Okra ₱26.25/kg • Carrots ₱39.90/kg
Champion Watermelon ₱16.80/kg • Solo Papaya ₱17.90/kg •
Red Globe Grapes ₱94.50/kg • Karachi Ponkan ₱63.00/kg •
Avocado ₱47.25/kg • Santol Bangkok ₱52.50/kg
S&W
Fruit Cocktail
840g ₱62.50/can
Tres Cepas
Solera Brandy
1.75L ₱402.00/bot
1L ₱218.00/bot
700ml ₱165.00/bot
Maggi
Broth Cubes Pork, Shrimp, Beef 66g P21.60/box
Tamarind 66g P19.70/box
Sinigang sa Sampaloc Mix 20g P7.50/pk
P13.20
Purefoods
Chick N' Tasty Hotdog Reg. 1kg P90.00/kg
Corned Beef 210g P41.80/can
CDO
Reg. Hamburger Patties 225g P30.30/pk
Pampanga Style Native Tocino 500g P69.30 pk
Vienna Sausage 70g P12.40 can
Chinese Luncheon Meat 165g P19.35 can
Nesvita
Pro-Heart Natural Probiotic Drink 4/80ml P59.70/pk
Mama Sita's
Caldereta Mix 50g P16.15/pk
Kare-Kare Mix 57g P15.40/pk
100g P19.60/pk
Eight O'Clock
Orange-Ponkana 1kg P72.60/bag
Magnolia
Quickmelt 500g P119.70/box
Star Margarine 1kg P118.60 can
Country Goodness
Fresh Milk 1L P45.65/tetra
Low Fat Milk 1L P46.55/tetra
Chocolate Milk 1L P52.30/tetra
200ml P13.15 tetra
Del Monte
Fiber Enriched 100% Pine Juice P15.95/can
P45.10/can Four Season's Juice Drink
P41.50/can Pine Orange P37.05/can
Classic Recipe Sauce Mechado, Caldereta, Hot & Spicy 200g P15.20
Silver Swan
Soy Sauce 1000ml P22.95/bot
340ml P8.50/bot
Sukang Puti 1000ml P20.25/bot
350ml P7.50/ml
Quick Chow
Instant Mami Beef, Chicken, Hot & Spicy Beef, Hot & Spicy Chicken 55g P4.25
Zest-O
Cola, Rootbeer P25.75 Calamansi Soda, Dalandan, Pomelo P25.70
Moondish
Laing w. Tuna Flakes, Laing w. Tuna Flakes Hot & Spicy, Vegetarian Style Traditional 150g P19.80/can
Golden Oats
Instant Oats P39.95 bag
Quick Cooking Oats P38.50 bag
Century Tuna
Flakes in Vegetable Oil, Hot & Spicy 180g P23.40/can
Argentina
Corned Beef Chunky 60g P18.65 can 100g P23.50/can
Ram
Tomato Sauce P13.50
115g P9.40
Tomato Paste 1kg P18.25/can
Mother's Best
Apple Catsup P12.70/bot
Absolute
Pure Distilled Drinking Water P32.80
P48.00
Summit
Natural Spring Water P29.20
P44.00
Golden Hands
Ramirez
Tome
Comstock
Blueberry Pie Filling 595.35g P100.50/can
Strawberry Pie Filling 595.35g P95.50/can
Knox
Gelatine 226.8g P375.50 pcs 28.35g P65.50
Lay's
Potato Chips Regular, Sour Cream & Onion, KC Masterpiece BBQ, Salt & Vinegar 184.27g P80.40
Baked Regular 170.1g P94.00
Falcon's Valley
Whole Kernel Corn 425g P20.40/can
Cream Style Corn 400g P20.90/can
Wei-Chuan
Water Chestnuts Slices,
Water Chestnuts Whole 226.8g P23.00/can
Lactasoy
Soy Milk Regular, Chocolate, Vegetarian 200ml P12.40 tetra 1L P47.00 tetra
Famous House
Soy Bean Drink P20.50/can
Grass Jelly Drink P20.50 can
Mott's
Apple Juice 1.92L P105.50/bot
Happy Day
Grapefruit Juice 1L P69.00/tetra
Apple Juice 1L P60.25/tetra
Molinera
Marmalade Apricot, Orange, Peach, Strawberry 340g P74.40/bot
Nusica
Spread Hazelnut, Hazelnut Milk P70.20 bot
Sun-Maid
Tapioca
Libby's
Tomato Ketchup P53.50/bot
P80.50 P120.50/bot
Jolly
Spreads Duo Hazelnut, Choco Hazelnut P71.50 bot
Real-Fresh
Jolly Cow
Guylian
Tang
Orange Powder P122.50 bot
P175.50 P170.50/can
Country Time
Lemonade, Pink Lemonade P115.50/bot
Doña Elena
Pure Olive Oil 1L P270.00/bot
Extra Virgin Oil 1L P280.00/bot
A-1
Steak Sauce 283.5g P150.50/bot
Nabisco
Quaker
Kitchen Mate
Dishwashing Paste Box P17.20/box
750g P28.10
Brer Rabbit
Mollases Gold 340g P96.00/bot
Pampers
Ariel w/ Downy
Safeguard
Colgate
Total Toothpaste P63.10/tube
12 Clean Mint 90g P36.50/tube
Mr. Muscle
Bay Fresh
Pronto
Sanicare
Bathroom Tissue 400 sheets P111.40/bag
Jade
Bathroom Tissue 2-Ply P334.30/bag
Tisyu
All-Purpose Kitchen Towel P101.95
Reynolds Wrap
Standard P112.40
P114.70
Refill P51.30
P102.30
PVC Cling Wrap P52.75
White Wash
Washing Machine Detergent 6kg P159.00/box
w/ Fabric Softener 6kg P170.00/box
Jergens
Skin Care Lotion (All Variants) 500ml P107.00/bot

WILL Antonio

ROD Nepomuceno

ITOS Valdes

JOSE Moreno

VICTOR Consunji

Men's skin care with lots of caring

From page G1

most men favor "performance" over fancy packaging, esoteric ingredients and strong perfumes.

Zirh offers products to allow the user to treat his skin in three easy steps: Clean, an alpha-hydroxy face wash; Correct, a vitamin-enriched serum; and Protect, a daily face moisturizer.

A complement to this approach is Defend, a moisturizer with SPF-15. In addition to its basic line, a variety of other Zirh products offer men the chance to treat problem areas and optimize the look and feel of their skin. Zirh also has a line of freshly scented colognes and eau de toilette.

Metrosexual clients

Executives of Lux Asia, Ltd., local distributor of Zirh and the firm behind My Beauty Hub, expects the brand to do well in the Philippines as a growing number of "metrosexuals" continue to plunk down money on what they deem as grooming and beauty essentials.

"The market ranges from businessmen to guys who love to party," says Anna Flores, product manager of Zirh. "We've even come across mature men like politicians and judges. Zirh is admittedly a bit pricey compared to mass-market brands, but men who come to us don't seem to mind."

Flores credits the market's growing awareness to "education." As part of its marketing thrust, Lux Asia regularly conducts beauty and grooming workshops at My Beauty Hub (6750 in Makati). The shop also offers other brands that are exclusively distributed by Lux Asia in the Philippines.

"We just don't push our products," says Rosales, "we share our knowledge on beauty and skin care with other people. Even if they don't buy our products, they'll hopefully help us spread the word to those who're interested."

In line with Zirh's recent launch at the Power Plant Mall, Lux Asia also unveiled its newest retail shop called Men's Inc.

Five accomplished men who best personify the Zirh "icon" graced the launch. They are producer Itos Valdes, basketball star Will Antonio, telecom president Jose Moreno, lawyer Rod Nepomuceno and contractor and professional photographer Victor Consunji.

Their skin-care needs are certainly as specific as their varied lifestyles and occupations.

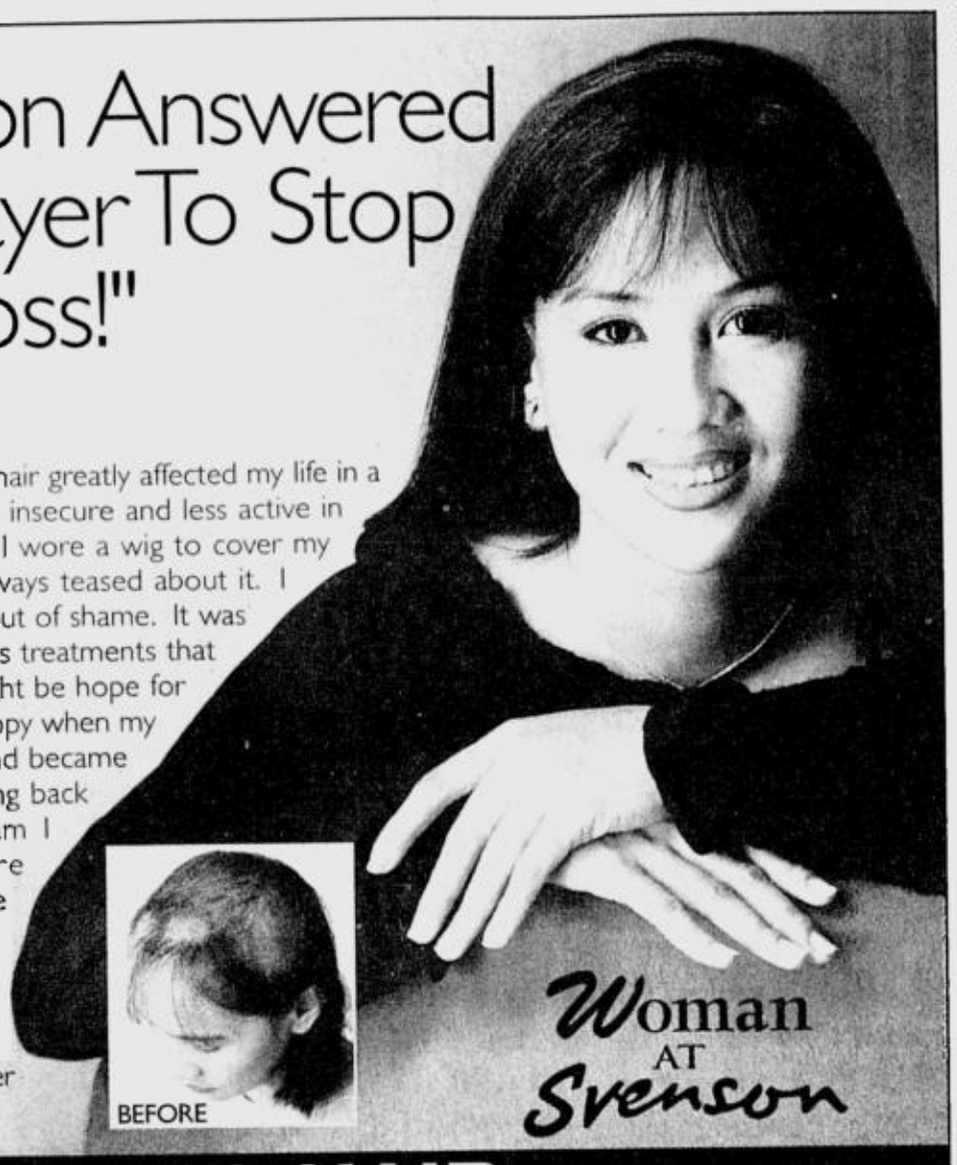
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

MEN'S Inc. at the Power Plant Mall features Zirh, among other products. Skin-care experts entertain questions on grooming and skin care at several counters.

"Svenson Answered My Prayer To Stop Hair Loss!"

- Jennifer Callanta

"Losing so much hair greatly affected my life in a painful way. I became insecure and less active in joining sports. When I wore a wig to cover my balding head, I was always teased about it. I wanted to disappear.out of shame. It was only through Svenson's treatments that I discovered there might be hope for me yet. I was very happy when my hair began to grow and became thicker again. It's going back to normal and so am I because I'm more confident now! If I see someone with a hair loss problem, I always recommend Svenson. It's a blessing for me, the answer to my prayer for more hair!"



Woman AT Svenson

CALL 892-HAIR (4247)

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QUEZON CITY 3/F CKB Center
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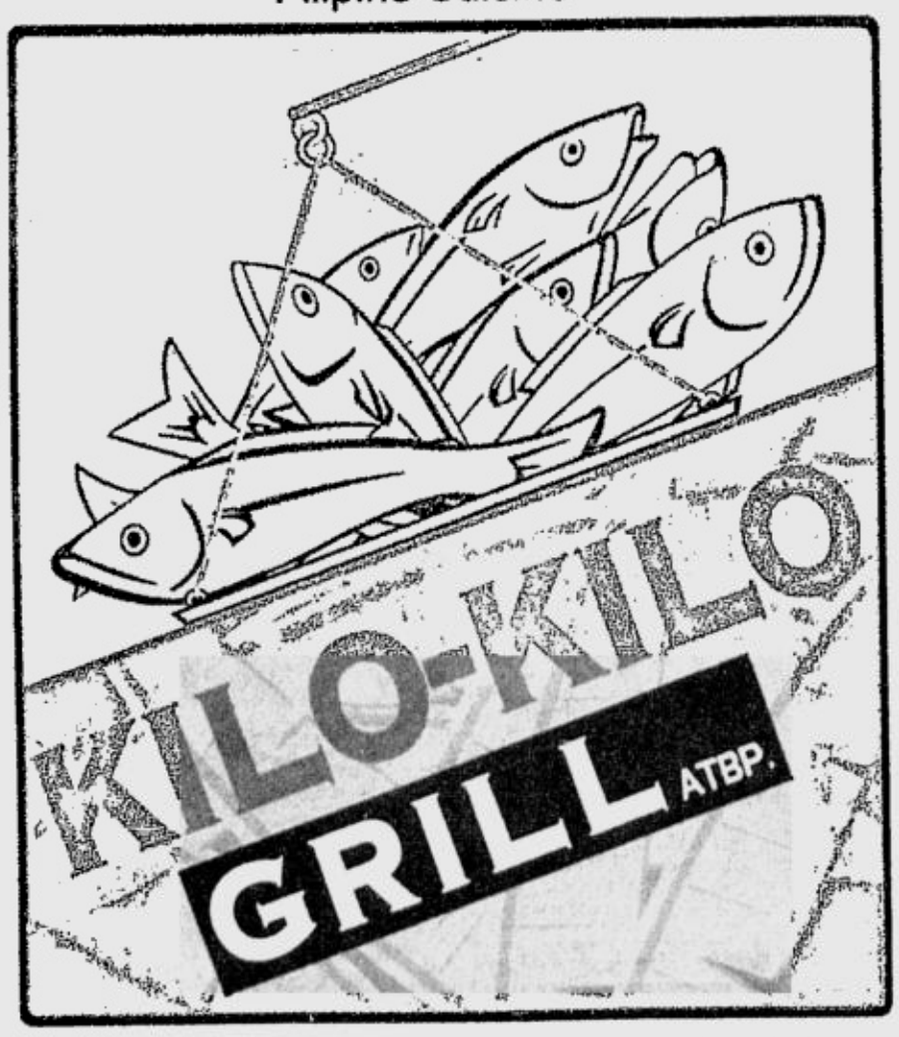
chain of restaurants gives birth to a new milestone in Filipino Cuisine



Kilo-kilong bagong huling hito, plapla, tilapia, dalag atbp...
Kilo-kilong inihaw na liempo, spareribs, sari-saring pansit
at ang orihinal na pagkaing luto sa buho
sa napaka MURANG HALAGA

P. Guevarra corner Wilson St., San Juan, Metro Manila. Tel. no. 725 6749

Sun-sational summer tips

BEFORE you head out and engage in fun activities, gear up to beat the summer heat. Here are some "sun-sational" summer tips from Nu Skin Enterprises Philippines, Inc. (NSP), a leading multi-level marketer of premium personal care products and nutritional supplements.

To protect your skin from the sun's harmful UV rays, try Nu Skin's Sunright products enriched with Sun Protection Factor (SPF). Sunright 35 Face & Body Block is formulated with Parsol 1789, which shields your face and body from infrared rays. It also filters UVB rays that may cause skin cancer and melanoma.

On the other hand, ensure total protection of your lips with Nu Skin's Sunright Lip Balm SPF 15. It has SeaLastin, Nu Skin's exclusive seaweed-based ingredient that promotes healthy collagen, making the skin soft and supple, as well as rich emollients that keep the lips smooth and moisturized.

Go for water-based daily, basic skin care rather than oil-based products, which are heavy and attract UV rays that can cause skin discoloration or pigmentation. Drink lots of fluids, water especially, because it normalizes one's metabolism and replenishes moisture loss.

Likewise, it is best to sport pastel-colored clothing made from light fabrics like cotton or linen. Dark-colored garments attract ultraviolet rays that may irritate or burn the skin. Invest in a good pair of sunglasses to protect your eyes and add more pizzazz to your fashion style, too.

Take out those stylish hats and bright floral umbrellas because you'll definitely need them to shield you from the scorching sun as you stroll along the park or frolic in the beach.

With Nu Skin's Sunright products and summer tips, you can totally enjoy summer without having to worry about your skin.

Call 6890333 or visit www.nuskin.com.ph

NU SKIN's Sunright 35 Face and Body Block and Lip Balm SPF 15

LIFESTYLE
For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer life name/age/ city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

JEOFFREY Moran of Emphasis-Rockwell is named Schwarzkopf's 2004 Philippine Hairdresser of the Year. At right is his winning entry for the Avant Garde category.

The top three plums of the 2004 Philippine Hairdressing Awards go to Emphasis salon in Rockwell

Hail the hair wizards!

By Cheche V. Moral

IT WAS undoubtedly the most awaited event for the country's hairdressers Tuesday night when some 500 of them from as far as Iloilo, including salon owners, converged at the Isla Ballroom of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, to witness the finals night of the 2004 Philippine Hairdressing Awards (PHA).

Presented by Schwarzkopf Professional and Top Style Marketing Inc., the official Philippine distributor of the German hairdressing brand, the event saw the top three awards going to Emphasis salon in Rockwell, Makati City.

The salon's young hairstylist, Jeoffrey Moran, was chosen Philippine Hairdresser of the Year. Moran, who was away in Kuala Lumpur, also bested five other entries in the Avant Garde category with his "modern-day Cleopatra" look.

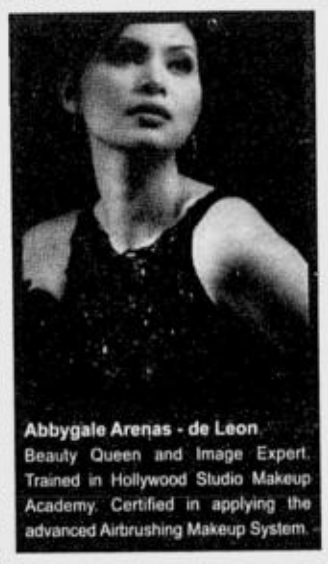
His ecstatic colleagues at Emphasis-Rockwell, who were also adjudged Team of the Year, accepted the trophy on his behalf. The team was composed of Lourd Ryan Ramos, Abbygale Arenas-de Leon, Leodegario Rivera and Moran.

In 2002, Emphasis-Rockwell also bagged the Best Creative Salon Team award. Danny Katalbas of Emphasis also won in the Avant Garde category and was

HAIL/ H2

TEAM of the Year is bagged by Emphasis salon in Rockwell. The team, shown here with colleague and 2002 Philippine Hairdresser of the Year Danny Katalbas (second from right), is composed of Leodegario Rivera, Abbygale Arenas-de Leon, Lourd Ryan Ramos and Moran. Above is part of their winning entry. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

WACOAL NEWS
Wacoal



Abbygale Arenas - de Leon
Beauty Queen and Image Expert. Trained in Hollywood Studio Makeup Academy. Certified in applying the advanced Airbrushing Makeup System.

Cosmetips that fit you!

I believe in the beauty of the Filipina. In essence, she is simple, yet elegant... serene, yet captivating. Sadly, only a few explore ways of highlighting their natural beauty through makeup.

We tend to think that makeup is expensive and time consuming. Actually, makeup is a very cheap investment. For local brands, it only costs 10-12 pesos a day for a full application. It only comes out expensive when you buy products that do not fit your features. Wearing makeup only takes about 5-10 minutes. The key is to know what look fits you and how to achieve it. Think of it. 10 pesos and 5 minutes a day are just fragments compared to the immense benefits makeup can give you!

For me, wearing makeup not only enhances our features, it also gives us the confidence to face the world. How to choose and use the makeup that fits you? Let me share some simple yet useful makeup tips through ten basic products. You don't have to apply all items at once. Just choose what fits your lifestyle and personality.

1. ***Finding a Foundation*** - Remember, if you have oily skin, use a cake foundation. It'll hold for the whole day. For those with dry skin use a cream or liquid foundation. It will keep your skin moisturized. Choose a shade by testing it on your jaw line. It should blend with the color of your cheeks and neck. Don't test it on your hand because the texture and color is different. Don't forget to put a little on your ears and neck. Use only your beauty fingers (middle and ring fingers) whenever you touch your face. They give the pressure that's right for your face's delicate skin. Follow your hair growth when applying foundation. Use upward strokes on your forehead, while downward strokes on your cheeks. It will look more natural and won't penetrate deep in the pores. After, apply powder for a smoother surface and better color application.
2. ***Concealing Secrets*** - Concealer help camouflage dark areas of the face like the corners of the nose and lips. For a fresher look, simply put some concealer under the eyes to remove dark circles and on your eyelids because they too tend to be dark. This will help bring out the color of your eye shadow.
3. ***The Eyebrows Miracle*** - Well-groomed eyebrows make all the difference! It clears up the eye area, making you look more refreshed. There are different ways of trimming your eyebrow:
   - Shaving is cheap, painless and fast. However, hair grows back quite fast.
   - Tweezing is more manageable, but can be quite painful.
   - Waxing prevents growth longer, but trimming is abrupt and painful.
   - Threading is less painful and trimming is gradual, but has to be done in a parlor.

   Don't use black for your eyebrows, even if you have black hair. Your eyebrows will look stiff and unnatural. Use dark charcoal, charcoal or dark brown. If you're using a pencil, stroke it with a brush then gradually apply it to your eyebrows.
4. ***Eye Shadow Without a Doubt*** - Applying eye shadow is quite easy. Just remember. Dark colors give depth while light shades do the opposite. Experiment to know what fits your look.
5. ***Definition by Eyeliner*** - Eyeliner defines the eyes. To bring out the shape for your eyes, put dark eyeliner above your eyelashes and below the eyes. For "bigger" eyes, use white eyeliner under your eyes.
6. ***Batting Eyelashes***

   Curl 'em
   Eyelash curler brightens the eyes. Asian eyelashes are shorter and tend to go downward. So buy an Asian brand. It's designed to reach the shorter lashes. Also, the rubber should not have a groove in the middle. This can pull your eyelashes; it will also give you an angle instead of a curl. Curling should be done in steps. Start with the roots. Hold it for 8 to 10 seconds, then slowly move it upward. Do this until you reach the tip. This will give your eyelashes a lovely curl.

   Mask 'em
   Mascara helps your eyelashes to appear full. Start from the roots; use a zigzag motion up to the tips for an even coat. Hold your eyelid up while doing this. Put mascara on your lower lashes too.
7. ***Blush on a Smile*** - Here's a new way of applying blush on. Give a big smile and then blush away! It's called the sun-kissed look. This natural look reproduces the rosy cheeks we get while under the sun.
8. ***Lip Liner to Pucker Up*** - For mature ladies who want to define their lips, choose a shade that's close to your lipstick for a smoother blend.
9. ***Glossy Lips*** - Put a lip-gloss over your lipstick. This will give the shimmery look that's in today.
10. ***Powder Power*** - Throughout the day, you might need to retouch. Just use a blotting paper or apply powder to freshen up.

With these tips, go ahead. Explore. Experiment. Discover the look that will fit your lifestyle and personality. Remember, having the perfect fit gives you the confidence to face anything and anyone! Same thing goes with undergarments. The more suited it is to your body, the better you feel, the better you perform. This is exactly why I support Wacoal's current campaign, The Perfect Fit. We want women to be aware that by simply wearing a brassiere that perfectly fits them, their level of comfort and confidence will improve.Have fun with your makeup! Know what fits you. You might even discover ways to bring out the beauty you've been hiding.

Your size is only a guideline to achieving a Perfect Fit!

Size refers to dimensions, not shape. As everyone has a different shape, and any one person's body shape may alter from day to day, your own body shape must be considered when you are purchasing underwear. For your underwear must not only be the right size, it must fit your shape.Similarly, though undergarments may be of the same size, their fit varies depending on their design, fabric and cut. The size of an undergarment is still a basic guideline to determining fit. Thus, it is very important that you try the undergarment to ensure that it really does fit you comfortably.

Does your bra suit the shape you desire for your body, your taste or the way you feel?

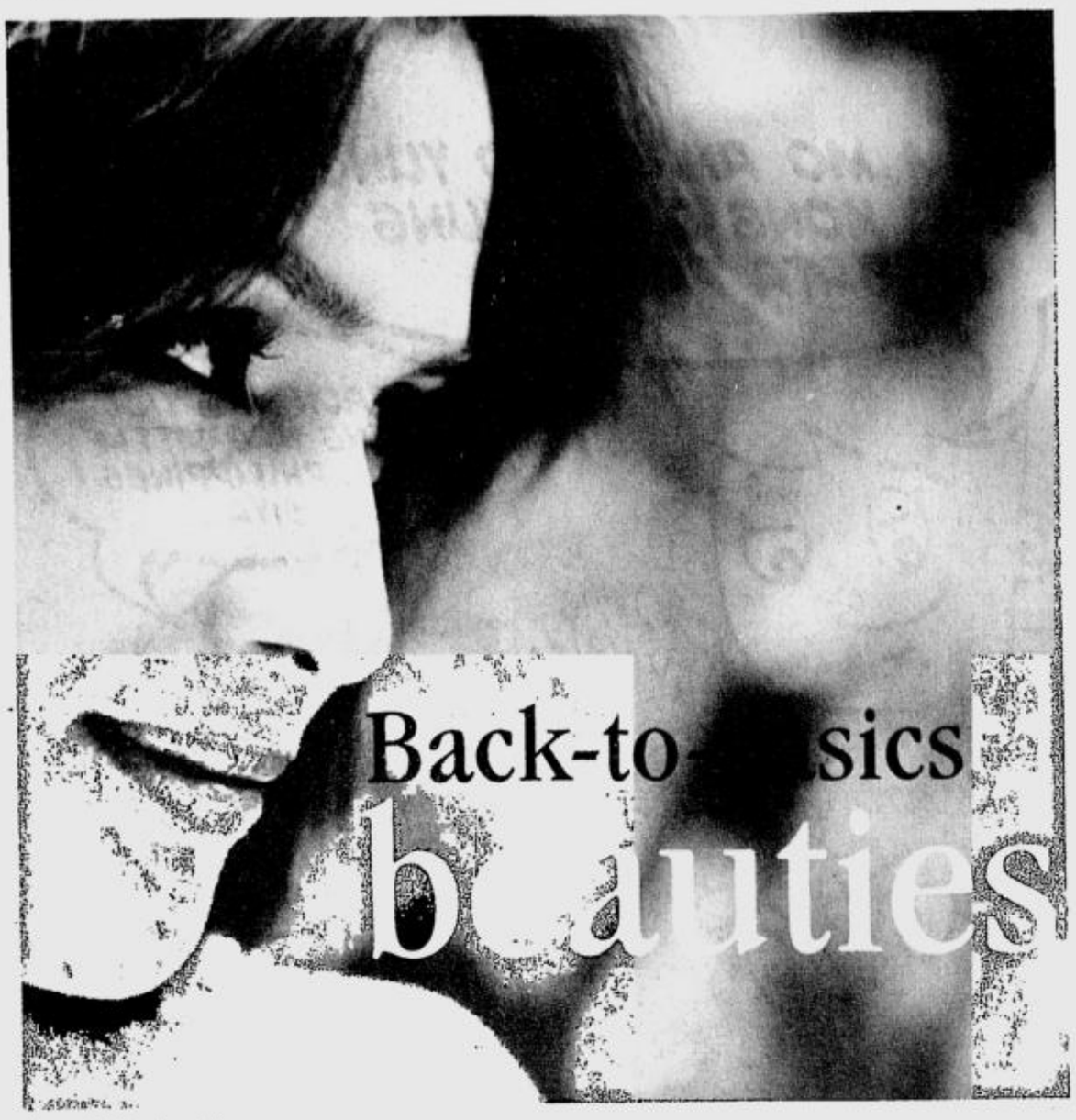
The basic requirements of a good bra!

Undergarments that fit your body must:
1. Be comfortable when worn
2. Remain in place during movement; and
3. Beautifully support your figure.

In other words, undergarments must feel good!

A good bra must satisfy 8 major requirements. It must:
1. Gather the bust in the center.
2. Provide bust support.
3. Provide bust lift.
4. Possess well-balanced support.
5. Promote a comfortable and natural fit.
6. Create beautiful, dimensional shaping.
7. Facilitate easy movement without burdening the body.
8. Feel so natural that you forget that you're wearing it.

CUSTOMER SERVICE HOTLINE Tel No.: 884-1517 • Email: philwacoal@skyinet.net



Back-to-basics beauties

AGOT Isidro Sandejas

ALUNAN sisters—Alexi, Christina, Katrina and Barni

FELICIA Atienza

CRIS and Monique Villonco

CHRISTINE Jacob Sandejas

PREMIUM beauty brand Dove believes that real beauty isn't boxed into being young or fair-skinned. It celebrates 11 women (from fresh graduates to grandmothers, Chinese *mestizas* to *morenas*) whose beauty is natural, effortless and unique.

Their secret to beauty: Stay fresh, use only the purest and gentlest products, adapt a simple routine that fits into a busy schedule and remember that what makes you beautiful is what's inside you.

Keep it fresh

Former singer Cris Villonco and commercial model Alexi Alunan—both in their early 20's—have a very simple beauty philosophy: Stay fresh.

But since frequent showering can dry out the skin, Cris uses Dove cream bar. "It's got extra moisturizers *kasi*, so my skin stays supple no matter what." Her mom Monique also uses Dove, especially when she's in New York. "The climate gets really harsh, which ruins the skin. The moisturizers help counter that."

Alexi likes Dove's light, clean scent. It was the first thing that attracted her when she first tried the body wash and deodorant. Plus, Dove leaves a "soft, moisturizing feel"—very luxurious, very pampering, but without the fuss of other products.

Keep it mild

Alexi Alunan's sister Christina has to dress up every day; it's expected of her as a sales executive for ABS-CBN. But just because she has 20 lipsticks doesn't mean she needs 20 creams.

Katrina Alunan Gonzalez agrees. Because of her sensitive complexion, she suffered through several breakouts as a young girl before her dermatologist recommended Dove. "It's gentle, and comes in unscented variant, and it doesn't have any irritants," she says.

Keep it moisturized

Agot Isidro Sandejas, Christine Jacob Sandejas and Barni Alunan Escaler have noticed that their skin's needs have changed, partly due to age (they're in their 30's) and the damage of working under harsh lights and heavy makeup.

But they're also at the age when they have less time for complicated routines. Luckily, daily use of Dove and its moisturizing qualities help prevent many of the problems that require really intensive treatments.

"It's really very simple, really. I use Dove, and I'm okay *na*," says Agot.

Keep it real

Felicia Atienza was five months pregnant when she helped her husband campaign for a seat in congress. She's used to long hours—she was a stockbroker for 11 years, and even worked for Meryll Lynch—but was careful to take extra care of her body.

For her, nurturing is regular exercise (she would walk 4 km even when she was pregnant), yoga and Dove cream bar. "I have very dry skin so I need its extra moisturizing qualities," she says.

Entrepreneur Susan Reyes' motto is "Live light. Laugh as much as you can, and learn to forgive and forget." This attitude has helped her through some very painful experiences (like losing a loved one after a long fight with cancer, which eventually led her to set up Home, Inc., a private hospice provider).

For jeweler Jul Dizon, "Meditation, nature, regular retreats to the silence and beauty of our family farm, hugs from my grandchildren—these are my ways of connecting to the wonder of life."

SUSAN Reyes

Dove believes in real beauty as having no artifice, and these 11 women are proof that back-to-basics is the best beauty routine.

COMMERCIAL Style-winning entry of Paolo Olandez of Fix Bench-Glorietta

BONG Aparente of Profiles-Katipunan's winning entry for Men's Style

A LOOK from Newcomer of the Year winner Rey Dolorzo of Profiles-Katipunan

"THE REAL COLLECTION." Schwarzkopf Professional's Essential Looks for S/S 2005 (clockwise from top left) "Nu Street," "Kaleidoscope," "Hollywood" and "Rocker Girl," interpreted by Antony Whitaker and Alex Carbonell PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Hail the hair wizards!

From page H1

picked Philippine Hairdresser of the Year. He presented a fantasy collection on Tuesday night with Douglas Nierras' Powerdance.

Other 2004 winners included the diminutive Paolo Olandez of Fix salon in Glorietta for Commercial Style; Bong Aparente of Profiles-Katipunan for Men's Style; and the twentysomething Rey Dolorzo, also of Profiles-Katipunan, as Newcomer of the Year.

Regional competition

Held for the fourth time since 1998, the 2004 winners will compete in October for the top plums at the Asia Hairdressing Awards in Taiwan. The chosen Asia Hairdresser of the Year will be Schwarzkopf's guest stylist at the British Hairdressing Awards in London. Schwarzkopf Asia launched the regional competition in 1988.

According to Schwarzkopf, the PHA is unique in that entries are not limited to Schwarzkopf Professional clients alone. Votes are tabulated by an official auditor, and known only on awards night.

This year's panel of judges included salon professional Evelyn Alvaran-Cruz, US-trained hairstylist Vicky Sumbillo, 2000 Philippine Hairdresser of the Year Nikki Bacay, fashion designer Jojie Lloren and lensman Xander Angeles.

On Tuesday night, Schwarzkopf Professional also presented its "Essential Looks" for Spring/Summer 2005, interpreted by Propaganda salon's Alex Carbonell, Schwarzkopf's Philippine ambassador, and demonstrated onstage by Schwarzkopf global ambassador Antony Whitaker.

Dubbed "The Real Collection," Schwarzkopf's spring trends, according to Whitaker, deals with "real people and real hair." The styles, if edgy, are wearable and may appeal even to the non-models among us.

Fashion model moms

THE COUNTRY'S professional fashion models took a backseat recently to a dozen working moms and housewives who participated in the fashion show Safeguard Ginseng Tribute to Filipino Moms at SM Megamall's Atrium.

Launched in December last year, Safeguard's eight-mall simultaneous promo attracted women shoppers at Metro Manila SM Supermarkets. Mothers of all ages visited Safeguard Ginseng booths to be made-over by some of Manila's top makeup artists.

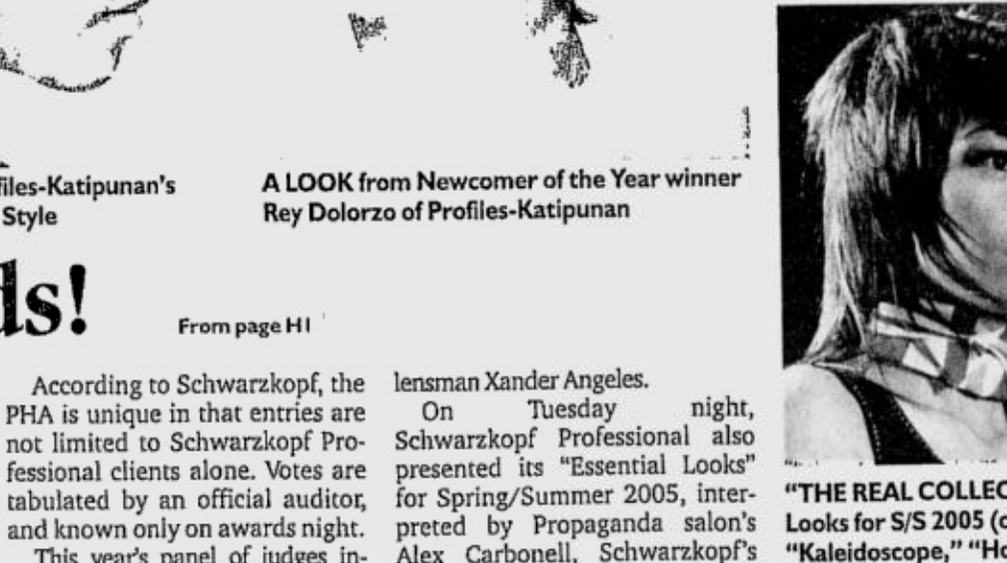
They also got souvenir photos of their new look courtesy of Safeguard Ginseng and Hewlett-Packard.

Of the more than 3,000 mothers who visited SM booths, 12 were chosen to become the Atrium show's featured models that capped the "Be Beautiful with Safeguard Ginseng" launch activities.

The 12 participants were chosen for their beauty and self-confidence and healthy, germ-free skin. The fashion show highlighted the benefits to health and beauty of Safeguard Ginseng soap.

The event was also Safeguard Ginseng's way of marking the International Women's Month.

The new Safeguard Ginseng is the 10th and latest product offering of Safeguard. It has the same superior skin germ protection that Safeguard products are known for. At the same time, it helps maintain healthy and beautiful skin.



EVENT host Menchu Antigua pays tribute to lucky moms in New Safeguard Ginseng's fashion show.

Beauty and fitness fair

BEAUTY and Fitness World 2005 will run May 26-28 at the World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

Now on its second year, the event gathers major and upcoming players in the beauty, wellness and fitness industry. It is the only exhibit of products and services in cosmetics, skincare, hair care, wellness and fitness, with local participants as well as cosmetics companies from Australia, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Activities include product sampling and demonstrations, talks on hair and makeup trends by Ricky Reyes, wellness by Cory Quirino and body sculpting by Dr. James Joaquino.

Lynn Romero, president of World Exhibitions and Conventions, Inc., organizer of the fair, says there are over a thousand companies engaged in manufacture, import or distribution of personal care products.

She adds beauty experts predict the upcoming trend is a return to the basics—natural, herbal or organic products.

Call 8918638 or 8347505. E-mail mkt@worldexco.com

Pixel Pleasures captures Alabang Town Center this

The best and the latest camcorders and digicams

By Joel V. Nigos

SUMMER is always a reason for vacation where family, friends or barkadas troop to their favorite destinations and take photographs or videos of their funniest, coolest or even their scariest moment.

Automatic Centre, recognized as the pioneer in appliance retailing in the Philippines, didn't want its customers to miss out on this opportunity as it presents Pixel Pleasures, a unique exhibit where you will find the best and the latest digital cameras and video camcorders available in the market in just one location.

Ongoing until May 8, at the Alabang Town Center, the exhibit showcases top of the line brands that would surely add sizzle to the summer heat. Among the best brands to be displayed are Canon, Casio, Hitachi, JVC, Kodak, Konica Minolta, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic, Pentax, Samsung and Sony.

Shares Geoffrey Lim of Automatic Centre, "We understand that when it comes to cameras, our customers require significant interaction with the products. They like to touch, feel and try the different brands for themselves before making their purchase decisions."

This is why Automatic Centre has purposely designed new display modules for Pixel Pleasures to allow customers to truly "experience" the cameras.

"We have therefore broken with the tradition of keeping these cameras in locked up glass showcases. Instead, we have created an experiential and interactive display for the public to appreciate and encounter cameras as they should be enjoyed," he adds.

Lim says that since Automatic Centre is associated with high quality brands and good service, the appliance retailer promises to deliver the same quality and service for cameras and video cameras at the Pixel Pleasures Exhibit.

"We also thought of something that's appropriate for the season ... The direction of the company is really about coming up with thematic exhibits to distinguish ourselves from the "traditional" appliance exhibits," he says adding that based on their previous experiences summer has always been the peak for products such as cameras and camcorders.

Lim says that what makes the exhibit also unique is that all the choices are pretty much in there. "Like other appliances or consumer electronic items, it's really hard to find all the models that are available in the market in just one location. The exhibit would surely give the customers the ease of digital camera and camcorder shopping."

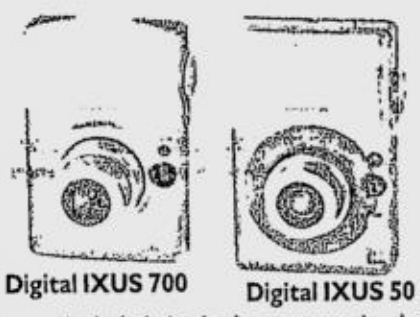
Expect to find the complete line of digital cameras at Pixel Pleasures, including the slimmest and the lightest that deliver 7-megapixels of resolution. Also, the hottest camcorders in the market that feature tape-less video recording as well as megapixel photo capabilities. "We have a whole range of products here, from the entry level to the most sophisticated. The exhibit basically appeals to a broader segment of the market."

What else are you waiting for? Head on to Pixel Pleasures where Automatic Centre promises a wide variety of cameras and video cameras at your fingertips. Avail of great prices, huge discounts, 0-percent installment deals, easy financing plans and expect lots of fantastic freebies at the exhibit. All major credit cards accepted.

The Pixel Pleasures exhibit is located near Corte de Las Palmas and right beside California Pizza Kitchen and HSBC.

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

Canon scales new heights with new Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50


Digital IXUS 700

Digital IXUS 50

CANON is proud to present the new Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50, the latest additions to the prestigious IXUS line up-the new duo of Digital IXUS does not sacrifice any performance in exchange for their stunning design. Canon has packed the latest technology and features into the ultra sleek and stylish casings of the Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50.

High megapixel, innovative design

With the Digital IXUS 700, Canon has achieved its first 7-megapixel designer-class camera to deliver photos with incredible vivid details to impress your audience, while the Digital IXUS 50 delivers equally stunning visual results with 5 megapixels of resolution.

The ultra-slim body with beautiful curved design of the new Digital IXUS 700 is the result of a revolutionary Perpetual Curve Design production technique. Using this technology exclusive to Canon, the Digital IXUS 700 achieves the extremely compact dimensions while retaining the sleek and stylish outlook of Digital IXUS designs.

Likewise, with the decorative metallic plating front ring to the high grade brushed steel texture case, the Digital IXUS 50's cool and sleek design is sure to capture attention anywhere.

Powered by DIGIC II

Both the Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 are powered by Canon's exclusive DIGIC II imaging processor for high quality images with natural colour reproductions and razor sharp clarity at faster processing speed. The DIGIC II imaging processor at the heart of both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 delivers faster AF speed, data transfer speed and shorter startup time. Images captured now looks more vivid and sharper, bringing the new Digital IXUS duo a class above its competitors.

Superb camera functions

For the first time in Canon digital cameras, the Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 come with the new "My Colors Function". Up to 9 exciting colours modes such as the Colour Swap, Colour Accent and Vivid Blue can be selected by the user to enhance or play around with colours of their subjects to their desire. Users can select and replace the colours of any object in the digital photo in real-time. Hence saving the hassle of retouching the images via the computer as you can get and see the effect instantly even before capturing the shot. Using Colour Swap, a person wearing a yellow shirt can be changed to having a red shirt in the image, and the effect can be seen in the viewfinder prior to taking the image. This Canon proprietary technology works not just for still images but also in movie mode.

Another innovative technology included in both cameras is the Jump function, which allows users to browse and search through images quickly and easily based on a specific search key instead of the conventional way of scrolling through the pictures one by one.

Users will now be able to activate digital zoom while shooting movies (in standard mode only) with the two new Digital IXUS cameras, allowing them to zoom in without needing to physically move closer or further from the subject. Your digital video shot will never be boring again as you can play around the visuals with zoom in close-up to wide shots.

Both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 feature 9-point AiAF with high-speed autofocus that allows the camera to accurately determine the point of focus in an image even if the subject is not in the centre of the composition ensuring pin-sharp images.

Shooting through the LCD is now easier with the two new functions - Quick-bright LCD and Night Display Function found in both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50. The Quick-bright LCD helps to solve the problem of low LCD visibility in daytime shooting, while the Night Display function makes subjects easier to view in nighttime shooting by allowing the user to check the framing before taking the shot.

Connectivity

Both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 supports High-speed USB 2.0 data transfer; this allows users to transfer heavy files from the camera to the computer in a breeze.

Giving you more connectivity options, the Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 supports direct connectivity and transfer to both Windows and Mac computers (Mac OS X v10.1.5 - v10.3) using the Print/Share button. With this button, time can be saved during downloading, making the whole process to be quick and easy.

Best of all, both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 cameras are PictBridge compatible allowing users to print directly to any brand of printers that is PictBridge compatible. Both Digital IXUS 700 and IXUS 50 support three PictBridge Print functions, which are "Fixed Size Print", " File Name Print" and "N-Layout". When used with Canon Compact Photo Printer, both cameras also support ID Photo Print and Movie Print. With the former enabling user to crop recorded image to the required size of ID size for passport and driving licenses while the latter allows user to print a series of stills from his or her favourite recorded movies.

– PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER –
Special PROJECT
FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2005

Quick Picks & Peeks

Automatic CENTRE
Now thru May 8 @ Alabang Town Center

PIXEL PLEASURES
THE BEST & THE LATEST CAMCORDERS & DIGICAMS

SAMSUNG

ITEM	PRICE	0% INTEREST	FREEBIES
SCD 353 (New!)	P 28,995	6 mos.	Bag, Tripod, Mini DVD tape
SCD 354 (New!)	P 31,995	6 mos.	Bag, Tripod, Mini DVD tape
SCD 455 (New!)	P 34,995	6 mos.	Bag, Tripod, Mini DVD tape
SCD 907 (New!)	P 54,995	6 mos.	Bag, Tripod, Mini DVD tape

OLYMPUS

ITEM			
AZ-1	P 13,995	12 mos.	
C-370	P 9,495	12 mos.	

CANON

ITEM			
PS A510 (New!)	P 15,050	3 mos.	Case & Clip Watch
IXUS 50 (New!)	P 28,500	3 mos.	Case & 128 MB MP3 Player
IXUS 700 (New!)	P 31,050	3 mos.	Case & 128 MB MP3 Player
IXUS i5	P 25,500	12 mos.	Case & 128 MB MP3 Player

JVC

ITEM			
GR- D270V	P 27,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel
GR- DF470V (New!)	P 35,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel
GZ- MC200U	P 74,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Beach towel
GR- DF550U (New!)	P 42,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel

PANASONIC

ITEM			
PV- GS35	P 32,800	3 mos.	Tripod & Bag
PV- GS31	P 27,800	3 mos.	Tripod & Bag
DMC- FX7	P 20,800	6 mos.	

PENTAX

ITEM			
OPTio S50	P 18,900	6 mos.	Case, 128MB SD
OPTio S5n (New!)	P 24,990	6 mos.	
OPTio WP (New!) [Water proof]	P 24,990	6 mos.	

KONICA MINOLTA

ITEM			
DIMAGE X50	P20,500	6 mos.	

NIKON

ITEM	PRICE	0% INTEREST	FREEBIES
COOL PIX 3700	P 15,600	3 mos.	CD 123

SONY

ITEM			
DCR- HC 21	P 28,999		3yr Warranty, P 3,000 Accessory Gift Check
DCR- HC 42	P 43,999		3yr Warranty, P 5,000 Accessory Gift Check
DSC- P100	P 23,999	6 mos.	3yr Warranty
DSC- T7/S (New!)	P 29,999		3yrs. Warranty, P 3,000 Accessory Gift check

KODAK

ITEM			
CX 7300	P 7,995	12 mos.	Camera pouch
CX 7330	P 9,995	12 mos.	Camera pouch
CX 7430	P 13,495	12 mos.	Camera pouch

CASIO

ITEM			
EXILIM S100	P16,500	3 mos.	Velcro Soft case
Z55	P22,500	6 mos.	Velcro Soft case

iPOD, AIRPORT EXPRESS & JBL ONSTAGE

ITEM			
Shuffle 512MB	P 6,999	6 mos.	Silicon case
Shuffle 1GB	P 9,999	6 mos.	Silicon case
Mini 4GB	P 13,990	12 mos.	IPod Sock
Mini 6GB	P 16,490	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket Set worth P1,900
20GB	P 19,900	12 mos.	IPod Sock
U2 20GB	P 22,900	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket set worth P1,900
Photo 30 GB	P 23,900	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket Set worth P1,900
Photo 60GB	P 29,900	12 mos.	IPod Sock
Airport Express	P 5,490	6 mos.	
JBL Onstage	P 10,900	12 mos.	

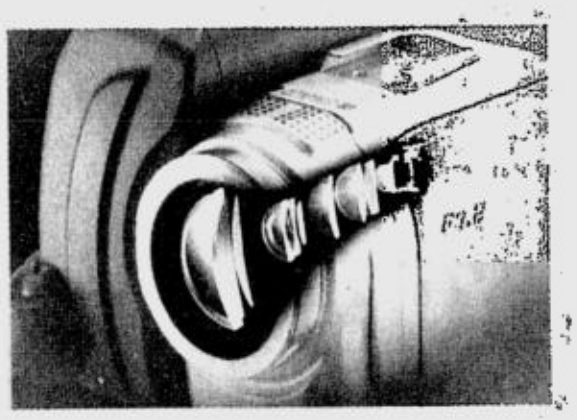
More pixel finds at the exhibit located near Corte de Las Palmas and right beside California Pizza Kitchen and HSBC

DISCOVER THE BIG DIFFERENCE...

The JVC GR-DF Series are equipped with F1.2 Lens

F1.2 BRIGHT LENS
Allows the camera to obtain twice the light of an F1.8 lens. assuring a bright picture with less noise, even in low light.

3-DIMENSION NOISE REDUCTION (3D-NR)
Reduces video noise by 30% (2dB) and improves picture quality. Especially effective during low light shooting.



LOW LIGHT PLUS
JVC's latest picture quality improvement technology using F1.2 lens and 3-Dimension Noise Reduction is called "Low Light Plus". This reflects the idea that JVC focuses on picture quality and superb color reproduction even in low light environments.

Megabrid | LIVE SLOW | Biphonic 3D Sound | 15x Optical ZOOM
Data Battery | Multi-Language OSD | 2.5" | DVD/VIDEO CD CREATION

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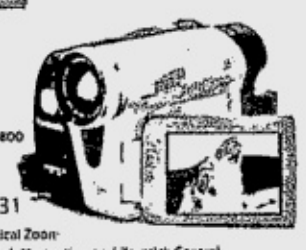
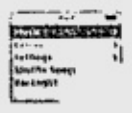
Panasonic

PV-GS35
- 30x Optical Zoom
- One Touch Navigation and Joystick Control
- 1.7 Quick Start
- Built-in LED Light
- USB 2.0 Video Streaming
- Simultaneous Video and Still Recording



PV-GS31
- 26x Optical Zoom
- One Touch Navigation and Joystick Control
- 1.7 Quick Start
- Built-in LED Light
- USB 2.0 Full Speed
- Simultaneous Video and Still Recording

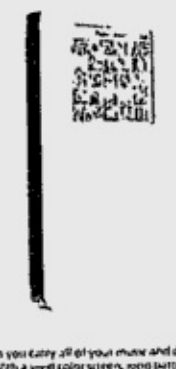
iPod



iPod photo

iPod is big enough to hold all your music and virtual enough to go anywhere. With the new Click Wheel, up to 12 hours battery life, and thumbnail photos on the main menu, the new iPod is better than ever. Available in 20GB capacity.

SRP: 20GB PhP 19,900

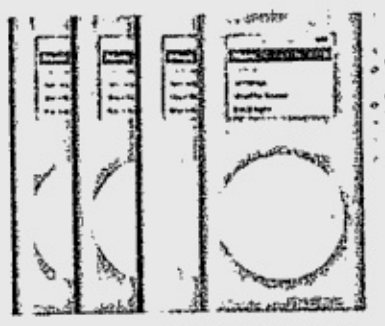


iPod U2

Like no other iPod U2 Special Edition stands out. Jet black, bears a permanent red Apple Click Wheel and, on the inside, the autographs of each U2 band member. iPod U makes listening to music sheer delight. You can certainly keep plenty of your music on this 20GB iPod.

SRP: 20GB PhP 22,900

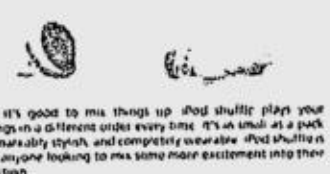
iPod mini



iPod mini is smaller than most cell phones and weighs just 4 ounces. Yet it packs a whopping 1000 songs and up to 8 hours of battery life. It's the ideal companion for any outing: a trip to the gym, a day at work, or a night on the town.

SRP: 4GB PhP 13,990
6GB PhP 16,490

iPod shuffle



Sometimes it's good to mix things up. iPod shuffle plays your favorite songs in a different order every time. It's as small as a pack of gum, remarkably stylish, and completely wearable. iPod shuffle is perfect for anyone looking to mix some more excitement into their music collection.

SRP: 512MB PhP 6,999
1GB PhP 9,999

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GZ-MC200
DIGITAL MEDIA CAMERA

Solid impact. Quality inclusive. The Everio for everyone who wants a product, and nothing but the very best. Comes with 4GB Microdrive®.

P74,990

Quick Picks & Peeks

Automatic CENTRE

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THE BEST & THE LATEST CAMCORDERS & DIGICAMS

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JVC

ITEM			
GR- D270V	P 27,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel
GR- DF470V (New!)	P 35,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel
GZ- MC200U	P 74,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Beach towel
GR- DF550U (New!)	P 42,990	6 mos.	Tripod, Camera bag, Mini DV tape, Beach towel

PANASONIC

ITEM			
PV- GS35	P 32,800	3 mos.	Tripod & Bag
PV- GS31	P 27,800	3 mos.	Tripod & Bag
DMC- FX7	P 29,800	6 mos.	

PENTAX

ITEM			
OPTio S50	P 18,900	6 mos.	Case, 128MB SD
OPTio S5n (New!)	P 24,990	6 mos.	
OPTio WP (New!) [Water proof]	P 24,990	6 mos.	

KONICA MINOLTA

ITEM			
DIMAGE X50	P20,500	6 mos.	

NIKON

ITEM	PRICE	0% INTEREST	FREEBIES
COOL PIX 3700	P 15,600	3 mos.	CD 123

SONY

ITEM			
DCR- HC 21	P 28,999		3yr Warranty, P 3,000 Accessory Gift Check
DCR- HC 42	P 43,999		3yr Warranty, P 5,000 Accessory Gift Check
DSC- P100	P 23,999	6 mos.	3yr Warranty
DSC- T7/S (New!)	P 29,999		3yrs. Warranty, P 3,000 Accessory Gift check

KODAK

ITEM			
CX 7300	P 7,995	12 mos.	Camera pouch
CX 7330	P 9,995	12 mos.	Camera pouch
CX 7430	P 13,495	12 mos.	Camera pouch

CASIO

ITEM			
EXILIM S100	P16,500	3 mos.	Velcro Soft case
Z55	P22,500	6 mos.	Velcro Soft case

iPOD, AIRPORT EXPRESS & JBL ONSTAGE

ITEM			
Shuffle 512MB	P 6,999	6 mos.	Silicon case
Shuffle 1GB	P 9,999	6 mos.	Silicon case
Mini 4GB	P 13,990	12 mos.	iPod Sock
Mini 6GB	P 16,490	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket Set worth P1,900
20GB	P 19,900	12 mos.	iPod Sock
U2 20GB	P 22,900	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket set worth P1,900
Photo 30 GB	P 23,900	12 mos.	Brando Crystal Jacket Set worth P1,900
Photo 60GB	P 29,900	12 mos.	iPod Sock
Airport Express	P 5,490	6 mos.	
JBL Onstage	P 10,900	12 mos.	

More pixel finds at the exhibit located near Corte de Las Palmas and right beside California Pizza Kitchen and HSBC

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F1.2 BRIGHT LENS
Allows the camera to obtain twice the light of an F1.8 lens. assuring a bright picture with less noise, even in low light.

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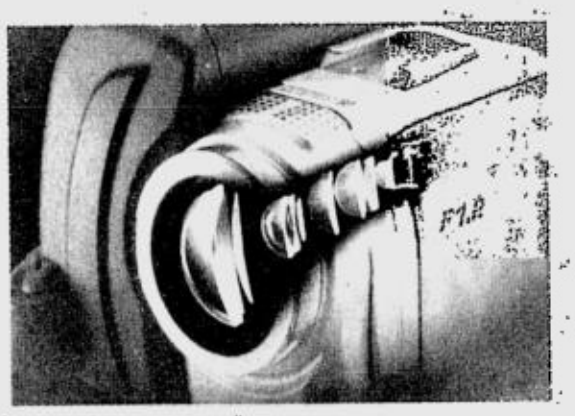

LOW LIGHT PLUS
JVC's latest picture quality improvement technology using F1.2 lens and 3-Dimension Noise Reduction is called "Low Light Plus". This reflects the idea that JVC focuses on picture quality and superb color reproduction even in low light environments.

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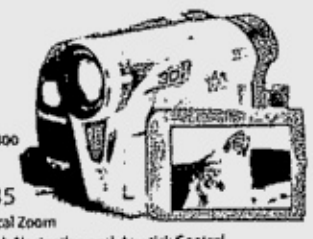
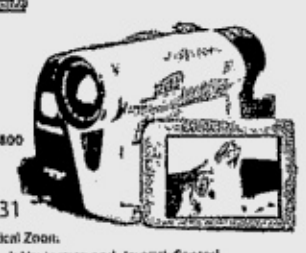
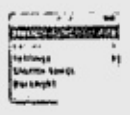


PV-GS35
- 30x Optical Zoom
- One Touch Navigation and Joystick Control
- 1.7 Quick Start
- Built-in LED Light
- USB 2.0 Video Streaming
- Simultaneous Video and Still Recording

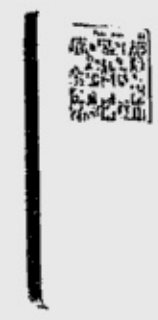


PV-GS31
- 20x Optical Zoom
- One Touch Navigation and Joystick Control
- 1.7 Quick Start
- Built-in LED Light
- USB 2.0 Full Speed
- Simultaneous Video and Still Recording

iPod



iPod photo



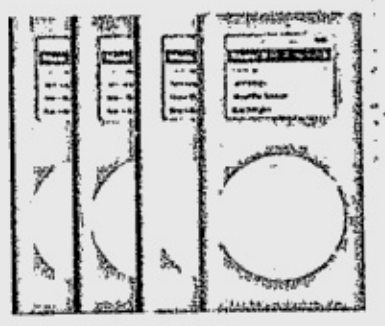
SRP: 20GB PhP 15,900

iPod U2

RP: 30GB PhP 23,900
60GB PhP 29,500

SRP: 20GB PhP 22,900

iPod mini



SRP: 4GB PhP 13,990
6GB PhP 16,490

iPod shuffle

SRP: 512MB PhP 6,999
1GB PhP 9,999

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Real Estate Supplement

CREBA EXPO 2005

'One World Under the Roof'

DEVIATING from mediocrity, the first major exhibition of the Chamber of Real Estate and Building Association (Creba), with the slogan "One World Under The Roof ," promises to bring exhibitors and visitors to a new level of exposition. The scope standard and creative presentation have been conceived to impress.

Set for July 27 to 30, Creba Expo 2005 will showcase the latest products, trends, innovations, and technology in the real estate industry in more than 8,000 square meters of exhibition space at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. It promises to be the most comprehensive gathering of innovative, functional, and dynamic trade exposition participants showcasing the best products and services from around the world.

Exhibitors from 20 countries are expected to participate in the event.

The trade show would present opportunities for establishing long-time business partnerships and will be a chance to network with the global key players and decision-makers in the industry.

According to Creba president Jaime Cura, the expo has three big plans it aims to achieve. These are to give nationwide housing program assistance to local government units; the full implementation of the Creba portal to service the needs of realty practitioners; and to link the various sectors in the industry.

WORLD/ 14

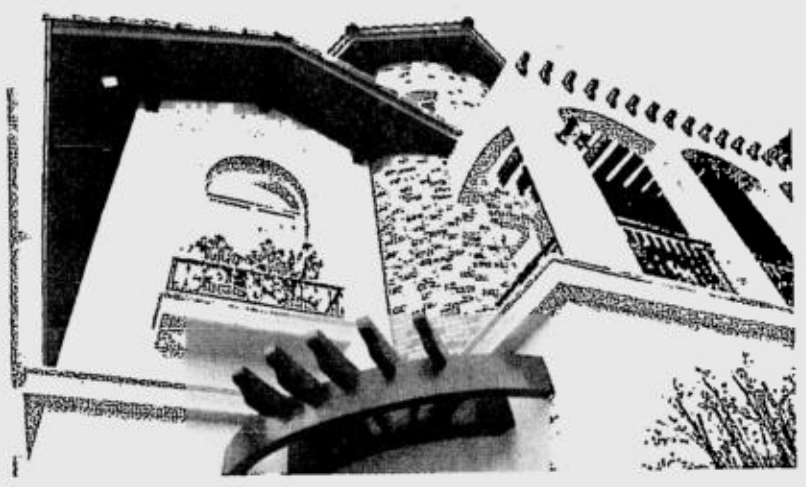
Irresistible Italian appeal of the Courtyards

ANCHORED on classic Italian style, the model homes of the Courtyards of Portofino recently unveiled, brings romantic Italian into the cosmopolitan Alabang area. Another offering from Brittany Corporation, known for successfully developing distinguished themed upscale residential communities, the Courtyards of Portofino is a valuable jewel in a trove of prime properties.

With only about 98 courtyard homes set on 5.6 hectares of rolling terrain, Courtyards of Portofino promises a private and safe haven while being only minutes away from Alabang business center.

The Courtyard homes offer a refreshing blend of traditional Italian flair influenced by the exigencies of tropical weather. Architectural designs from Recio+Casas and SC&A for the four home designs were commissioned to integrate the best of the outdoors and the indoors in quite ingenious ways.

COURTYARDS/ 14



The exteriors of the homes at Courtyards of Portofino are in bright sun-drenched colors using various textures similar to courtyard homes in Italy.

Imagine being with a loved one under the canopy of a clear, starry moonlit night. The evening is cool. The air is crisp. The wind blows softly, gently. It is idyllic, romantic...right out of the pages of a novel.

A masterpiece of Italian architecture

The homes at Courtyards of Portofino take design cues from Italy's courtyard homes.

Colors are sun-drenched. Bright yellows. Subdued reds. Light woods. Stone cladding adds texture and contrast. Archways and cupolas are distinctively old world Italy.

The master craftsmen

A team of the country's top craftsmen in property development worked together with Brittany to create the quaint magnificence of the Courtyards of Portofino.

The interiors were meticulously researched and crafted by Cynthia and Ivy Almario of Atelier Almario, so the homes are built for comfort, space and Italian style.

The architecture, designed in collaboration with Recio + Casas, is created with an eye towards emulating the magnificence of homes in Italy.

The landscaping, flourishing with greenery and accented by ornate Italian fountains, benches and charming cobblestone paths, is by Benny Velasco of FN Velasco and Jojo Lazaro of Ground Works.

From design to execution, Brittany maintains a guiding hand and a keen eye as it realizes its vision for a unique lifescape with the concept of courtyards within a courtyard.

Put together, the verdant landscape, the classic courtyard homes, and the elegant interiors create a scenic setting, where nature and man-made homes become an Italian orchestration punctuated by the romantic interlude of the courtyard.

Inside, the courtyard homes are designed with elegant Italian architectural details, including large windows, light-colored walls, wood floors and rounded corners.

Brittany's Courtyards of Portofino:

A Romantic Interlude

Now think about enjoying this moment, the romance of the outdoors, right inside your home.

This is the experience enjoyed at Courtyards of Portofino. A courtyard inside the homes provides a private, romantic nook from which to enjoy a cool starry night or a warm sunny day.

The courtyard: in tune with classic Italian design

The philosopher Socrates describes the courtyard with a lyrical quality, calling it a section of the home that is in harmony with the sun and moon and the entire home.

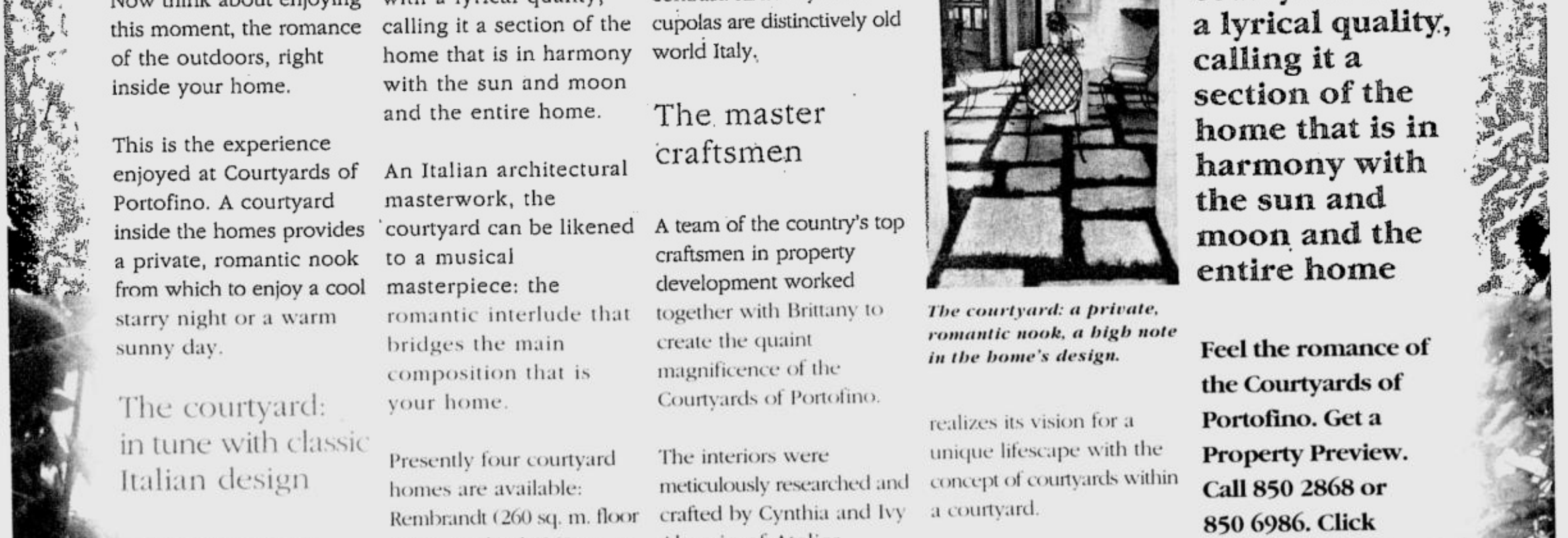
An Italian architectural masterwork, the courtyard can be likened to a musical masterpiece: the romantic interlude that bridges the main composition that is your home.

Presently four courtyard homes are available: Rembrandt (260 sq. m. floor area), Raphael (249 sq. m. floor area), Cézanne (193 sq. m. floor area) and Monet (233 sq. m. floor area).

The courtyard: a private, romantic nook, a high note in the home's design.

Socrates describes the courtyard with a lyrical quality, calling it a section of the home that is in harmony with the sun and moon and the entire home

Feel the romance of the Courtyards of Portofino. Get a Property Preview. Call 850 2868 or 850 6986. Click www.brittany.com.ph.



Rembrandt, the largest of the model homes, features a distinctively Italian cupola and arches.

One man's dream is to house thousands wisely

"TO LOWER the prices of decent condominium homes... to make it affordable to the emerging new generation that is our hope for the future."

This is the call master architect Gilbert C. Yu, founder and chair of G&W Project Development Consultants, has decided to heed. And he has made it his moral and social responsibility to make sure that those who spend their hard-earned money in achieving one of their lifelong dreams will not be at the losing end of the bargain.

It all began in 1971, in a small, downtown office in Manila. There were three people who comprised the entire staff of Gilbert C. Yu and Associates. And later on, when Gilbert Yu was joined by his brother, the firm was renamed Gilbert C. Yu & Willie C. Yu Architects & Associates. Today, with over 30 years of experience under its belt, it is now better known as G&W Architects, Engineers and Project Development Consultants, and is considered one of the top firms of its kind in the Philippines.

Presently, the firm is a full service organization with interests in architecture, interior design, engineering and project management services. It currently has 5 offices in Metro Manila and one each in Hong Kong, Xiamen and Shanghai, China. And, it also has a staff of over 200 - a far cry from the 3 they originally started out with.

G&W is the firm behind such familiar buildings as Insular Life Corporate Center, SM in Sucat and Bicutan, Landmark Shopping Mall in Makati, Embassy Pointe, Manila Diamond Hotel, Immaculate Conception Academy, Xavier School, Texas Instruments Semiconductor Factory, Evercrest Golf Club Resort, and Multinational Bancoporation Centre, among others.

But perhaps its biggest contribution to the housing and construction industry is a new development method called the Build-To-Own (BTO) System. This new and innovative way of providing condo units was largely patterned after our neighboring Asian countries. Comparing the BTO system with the conventional method of buying a condo unit from a middleman developer reveals the latter's flaws. Architects Yu explains, "The present method of building condos and selling it to buyers is outmoded, inefficient, overpriced, over-borrowed and is selling mortgaged properties with no protection to the buyer. People who continue to push the old method of providing condos are totally forgetting that the main purpose of building homes is to house people comfortably and in the best locations, while keeping it at a price that they can afford." For architect Yu, the BTO system is the best remedy for most of the shortcomings the real estate industry has imposed on the buyer during the mid-90's.

The main difference between the new BTO system and the conventional method is the elimination of the middleman developer. Why buy from a middleman developer when you can directly engage the same architects and engineers that these middleman developers use on their projects? With the middleman developer eliminated, its corresponding overhead, marketing expenses and executive fees will be too, saving the buyer as much as 40 percent from the usual cost of buying a condo. What most condo needers do not understand is that when buying from a middleman developer, P40 of every P100 that they pay will go to expenses that are unrelated to building their condominium unit. With the new BTO system, buyers are given the opportunity to own prime, first-class, real estate property in the likes of Bonifacio Global City at 40 percent less than what it would normally cost, with even better quality, and delivery of less than 24 months as evident in their Penhurst Parkplace project. Furthermore, BTO also protects the buyer from having his payment diverted to other purposes that are non-related to building their unit. This is because each unit owner deposits his payments directly to a depository and disbursement bank, which is under the strictest orders to use the funds only for the project for which it was originally intended.

A perfect example of a first-rate property which successfully employed the Build-To-Own system is Penhurst Parkplace in Fort Bonifacio. Managed by G&W, the project started in 2002 and was finished in 2004, taking much shorter than the usual 5-7 years of pre-selling and construction as promised by the middleman developer. As of July of 2004, until owners have already moved in and begun using their units. On the other hand, other condo projects in the area, which started at almost the same time as Penhurst Parkplace, are still far from being completed. In January 2004, the second BTO tower was launched, Kensington Place, and was immediately snapped up by the market by May, 2004. Kensington Place is now under construction, and will be finished on schedule in 2006 within 24 months of its inception.

With the new BTO system, the real estate industry will never be the same again. And to ensure that it changes only for the better. Architect Yu has made it his personal commitment to see to it that this new method will prevent speculators from penetrating the real estate and housing industry in order to make housing affordable for the people who really need it.

ARCHITECT Yu's passion is to make his company's expertise directly benefit the Build-To-Own unit owner. That's why he's laying his and his company's name and reputation on the line to make sure that the Build-To-Own unit owners get what they pay for at the time it was promised. After all people who need houses shouldn't be made to wait 5-7 years for theirs. Now, isn't that what building homes is all about?

ARCHITECT Augusto Concio, chancellor, College of Fellows together with national president Orlando Villarin of PIA doing the honors in the awarding ceremonies for architect Gilbert Yu.

Architect Gilbert C. Yu honored by PIA for innovation in the Philippine Housing Industry

LAST March 17, architect Gilbert C. Yu, founder and chair of G&W Architects was conferred as an honorary fellow of the oldest existing organization of architects in the country. The illustrious award was given to architect Yu by the Philippine Institute of Architects for his diversified contribution by Innovating the Architectural Profession and the Industry, through Ethical and Non-Traditional Ways. Already a Fellow of the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP), architect Yu was chosen to be recognized by the PIA even if he's not a member.

Pioneer of the new method, Build-to-Own (BTO) system, architect Yu made it his personal commitment to provide the same protection and savings found in other more developed countries like Singapore and the USA, to prospective homeowners in the Philippines. The success of the Build-To-Own system has been seen through G&W projects in Bonifacio Global City, namely Kensington Place and Penhurst Parkplace, which was fully owned in 3 short months, and was delivered in 21 months, 3 months ahead of schedule.

With Build To Own, the landscape of the real estate industry in the Philippines will have taken its first big step towards a more consumer protection oriented industry.

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Our direct cost : 120 sqm - 6.7M
Middleman price : 120 sqm - 9.8M

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Ayala Land launches new community with upgraded amenities

TREND-SETTING innovations in community development will be incorporated by Ayala Land Inc in a new residential subdivision in Southern Metro Manila. Adjacent to Ayala Alabang, the 20-hectare Sonera will exemplify a new generation of Ayala communities that will be smaller in size and at the same time feature upgraded amenities including the most advanced subdivision security systems.

A new phase of Ayala Southvale Village, Sonera is accessible from Daang Hari Road which directly connects to the Alabang Business Park and the rest of the well established Ayala Alabang residential community. Through the four-lane Daang Hari thoroughfare, Sonera is just a short drive from the Alabang Town Center, the De la Salle Zobel school, the PAREF Woodrose School and other facilities of the self-contained Ayala Alabang community.

Aside from its enviable location, Sonera will offer security systems designed by an internationally recognized security consultant and upgraded, underground amenities -- which mean fewer accidental power interruptions during inclement weather and virtually uninterrupted telecommunications for the homeowner.

In response to homeowners' needs for more stringent security measures, Ayala Land has tapped Control Risks Group to introduce innovative access systems similar to the e-pass in use at the South Luzon Expressway to control ingress and egress.

Tom Mirasol, Ayala Land Inc assistant vice president, notes that the real estate giant has very much kept in touch with technological advances in security measures. "We are simply responding to the need of homeowners for more stringent security measures."

He points out that Sonera has also been designed as an intimate community because smaller areas are easier to secure. In addition, residents of smaller subdivisions usually form closer bonds with one another. "Smaller communities are more closely knit and end up better managed in the long run," he says.

The 20-hectare Sonera will only have 200 or so lot owners. Lot sizes will range from 318 to 733 sqm. In addition, its residents are assured the same quality of life and excellent maintenance associated with Ayala Land communities. Sonera will be managed by Ayala Properties Management Corporation, which has a legacy of over four decades in sustaining upscale residential and commercial properties.

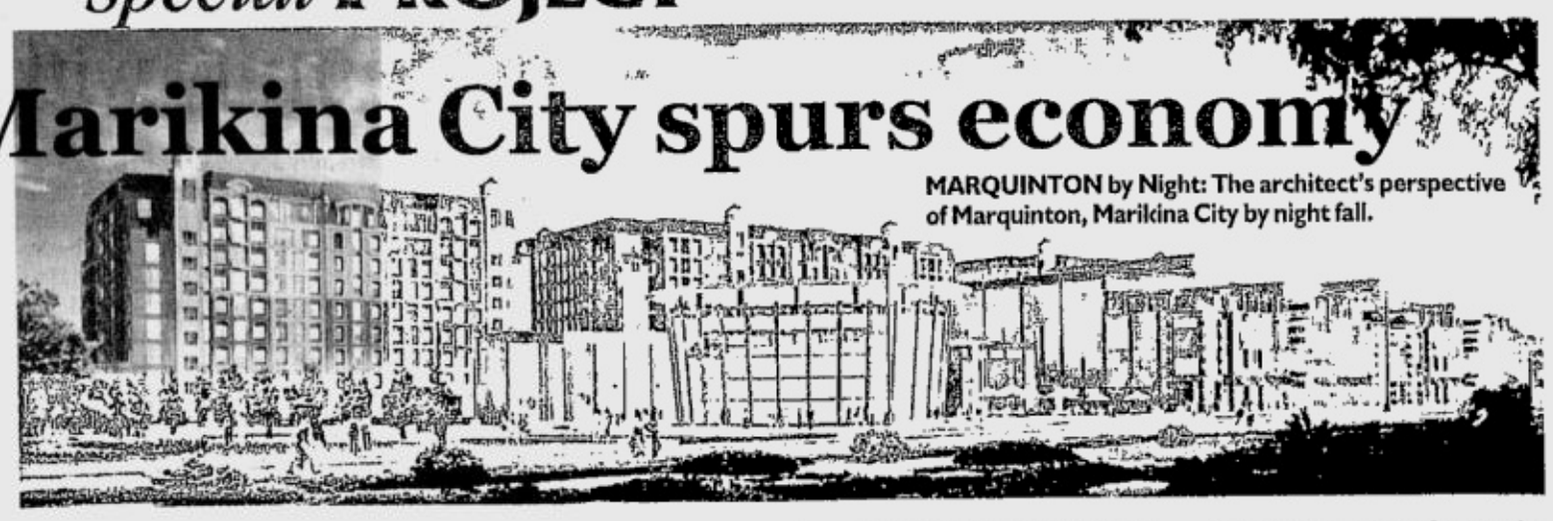
Mirasol observes that Sonera is likely to appeal to second- and even third-generation owners of Ayala properties. "People who have grown up in our communities are likely to seek the same quality of life and reliability we offer once they become homeowners themselves," says Mirasol.

He is confident that Sonera will also be warmly received by upwardly mobile families who have chosen Southern Metro Manila as their place of residence. Among residential subdivisions in this area, the most highly valued continue to be the projects developed by Ayala Land Inc.

For more information about Sonera, call 728-7000, log on to www.ayalaland.com.ph, or e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph.

AYALA Land officers at the Sonera sales office in Ayala Southvale, Las Piñas. Attending are, from left, Jay Caniza, Zaldy Mercado, Joel Luna, Thomas Mirasol and Jay Visco.

Confidence in Marikina City spurs economy



MARQUINTON by Night: The architect's perspective of Marquinton, Marikina City by night fall.

OVER the last 12 years, Marikina has transformed itself from a backwater industrial valley into a verdant and vibrant city that is the showcase of the best local government management in the country.

Federal Land, the property arm of the country's biggest financial services group, Metrobank, is among the first to take advantage of the emerging opportunities in Marikina City with the 17-hectare Marquinton, Marikina City—a master-planned community—and one of the biggest property development projects ongoing east of Metro Manila.

The greening of Marikina City has put to fore its natural endowments as a lush valley nestled between towering peaks of the Sierra Madre and the gentle rolling hills of Quezon City; and the Marikina river, one of the cleanest and safest waterways in the country, running through it.

"Federal Land's vision is to create healthy and liveable communities conducive to raising families for generations to come. The rapid development over the years in Marikina has made it become a cleaner and friendlier city to live in and more people realize that these achievements are essential in enhancing investment value." said Alfred Ty, president of Federal Land Inc who is optimistic that the Marquinton project would help in bringing Marikina City closer to its vision as a "Little Singapore".

The city's improvement in urban living standards has naturally fueled a pent-up demand for modern commercial centers that Federal Land hopes to address with the Blue Wave @ Marquinton, a three-level leisure and entertainment mall set for a soft opening this April 2005. Blue Wave will showcase the city's first quadruplex cinema, an Internet gaming center, a Time Zone of Australia video arcade and dining outlets like Starbucks, Jollibee, KFC, Max's Restaurant, Pancake House, Yellow Cab, Pizza Hut, Superbowl of China and other fast food outlets. Other shops will include non-food establishments such as a beauty and spa center, and other lifestyle and convenience shops.

Marquinton (short for Marikina Town Center) boasts of a great location with its proximity to Marikina City's main business center and recreational areas and accessibility with a sprawling frontage along the city's major access roads - Sumulong Highway and Fernando Avenue (formerly A. Tuazon Avenue). Blue Wave will also open up modular units available for entrepreneurs wanting to get a piece of the action in Marikina City.

Marquinton will also build three 8-story towers to meet the rising demand for a modern residential community with clean and wide roads and complete amenities. Alicante Tower will have 278 units ranging from 1BR - 3BR units (29 - 70 sqm) as well as 3BR Loft Units (88 - 95sqm) on the Penthouse level. Barcelona Tower will have 201 units ranging from 1BR-3BR units (30 - 88.5 sqm.) and 3BR & 4BR Loft units at the top floor. The Barcelona Tower is targeted for completion by 2nd quarter of 2006 while the Alicante tower will be finished by last quarter 2006.

Ty said Marikina's vision has jived well with Federal Land's vision of "constructing not just big concrete blocks, but building communities that people want to grow old with."

Federal Land has over 33 years experience in real estate development specializing in high-rise office, commercial and residential condominiums in Metro Manila.

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A mall with four cinemas, and all your favorite leisure, shopping, and food outlets:

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MARQUINTON

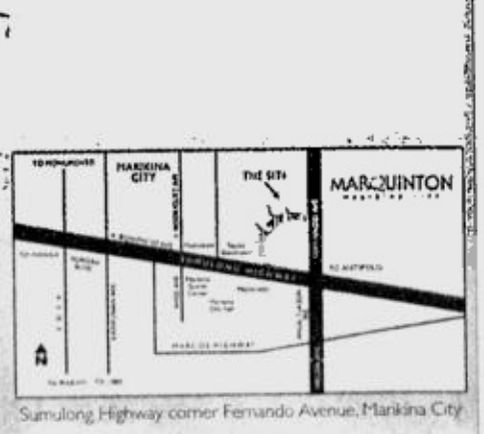
All the comforts of Marikina's newest residential development.

The convenience of living close to the metropolis' major thoroughfares.

A 17-hectare masterplanned development.

A space where you can celebrate life.

Welcome to the **Marquinton, Marikina City**.
Welcome to the urban life – redefined.



Sumulong Highway corner Fernando Avenue, Marikina City

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'One World Under . . .

From page 11

"We want to make this exhibition something unique," said Rosa Basa, executive vice president of Creba and chair of the expo committee. This will not be your usual tiangge. The World Trade Center will be transformed into a simulated subdivision, which will house the booths of the exhibitors. And like real subdivisions, it will have roads, street signs, and landscape entry. This concept will attract more visitors to the expo.

Creba Expo 2005 aims to create a business climate through business matching and other activities to ensure that at the end of the exhibit proper the exhibitors would have concluded business deals and partners.

The expo hopes to provide developers with an exhibit venue that will showcase their products in an atmosphere of creativity and distinct style. It would attract investors and exhibitors from the international market to tie up with local developers and suppliers. And it would offer the public an ideal site and opportunity, particularly the end-users and buyers, to avail themselves of financing through Pag-Ibig, the private banks and other financing institutions.

"Creba's contribution to the industry will come alive in this expo," said Cura.

Irresistible Italian appeal of the Courtyards

From page 11

As such, each of the four well-planned two to three story home designs features their own charming 20-to 30-sq meter indoor courtyard. That is, aside from the handsomely landscape central courtyard outside that homes will be clustered around.

And each of the models -- the 193 sq meter "Cezanne", the 233 sq meter "Monet", the 249 sq meter "Raphael" on a 306 sq meter lot, and the 260 sq meter "Rembrandt" on a 334 sq meter lot - are designed to make best use of space, light and air, maintaining natural cooling perfect for the tropical weather.

Natural light stream in through porticos, balconies and windows accented with louvers. The breeze moves along cool hallways and galleries. What's more, luscious colors of the interiors exude warm energy that flows from the welcoming public places on the ground floor to the intimate spaces of the bedrooms on the upper levels.

Carefully thought-out details mark them as homes of distinction and style: delightful foyers, luxurious master suites and baths, walls with keystones and awnings with wooden brackets.

The Rembrandt's dining room, for instance, features an impressive articulated ceiling. And its wooden staircase, by the living room, opens up to a dramatic volume ceiling, further accented by cathedral type windows and trellises on the side of the Balcon Arrandi.

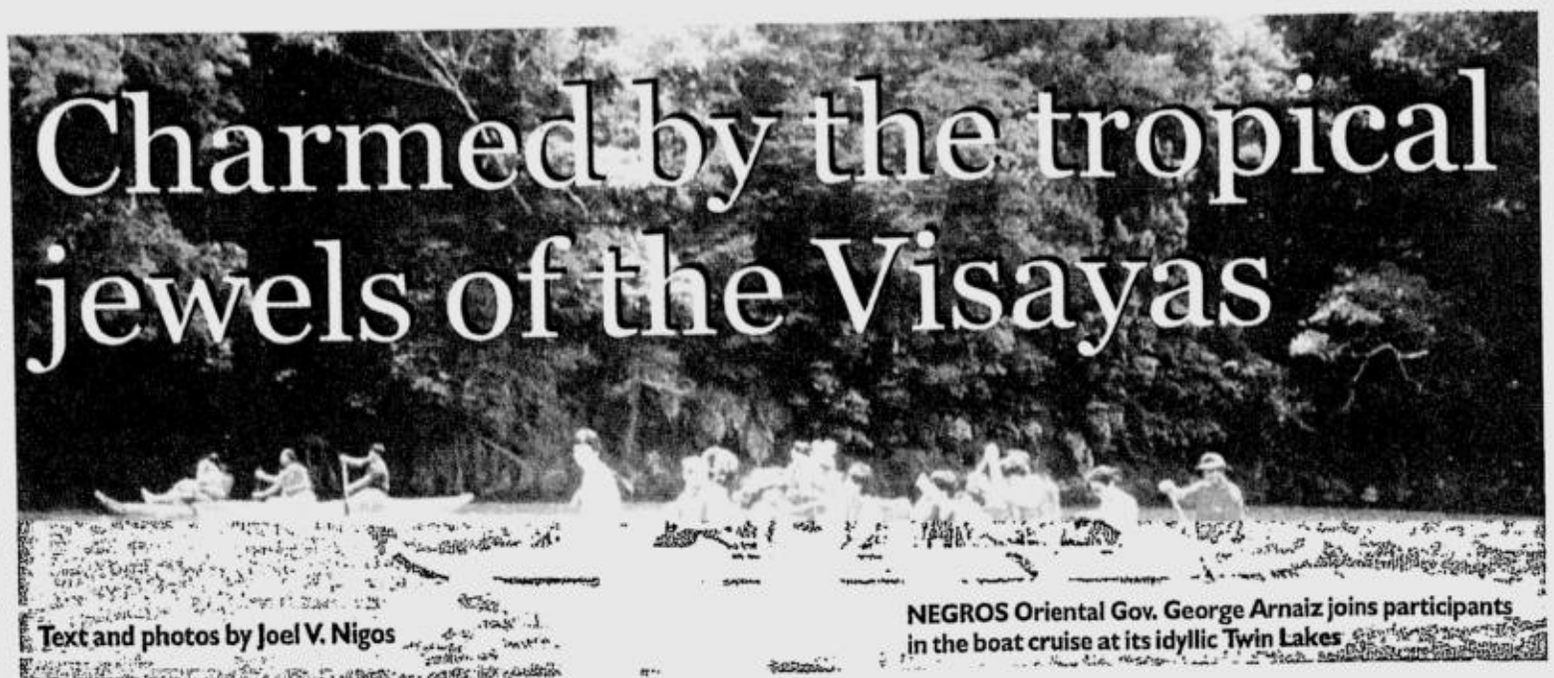
The Raphael, for its part, boasts of a unique façade that features a cupola, a dome-shaped structure on top of a larger roof, that gives it a distinctively Italian appeal.

Aside from the characteristic courtyards, all models also come with a casita at the ground floor, plus an auxiliary kitchen area, powder room for guests, lanai and a two-car garage equipped with automatic doors.

The Courtyards of Portofino is along the Las Pinas-Muntinlupa-Laguna-Cavite link road. Property previews may be arranged at 850 6986, 850 2868 and 850 3084.

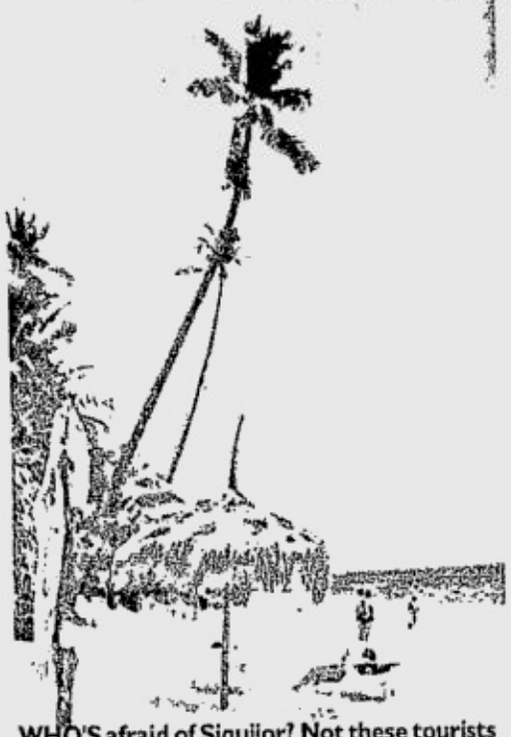
Hot summer's cool destinations

Charmed by the tropical jewels of the Visayas

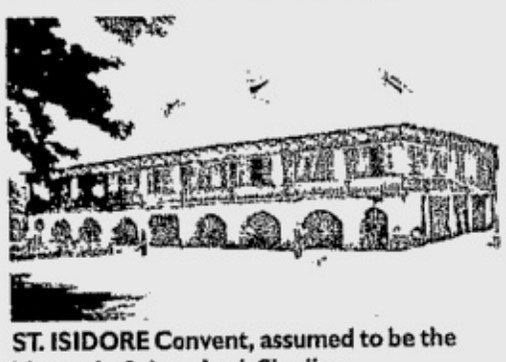


Text and photos by Joel V. Nigos

NEGROS Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz joins participants in the boat cruise at its idyllic Twin Lakes



WHO'S afraid of Siquijor? Not these tourists who enjoy Coco Grove Beach Resort's fine white sand beach in San Juan, Siquijor



ST. ISIDORE Convent, assumed to be the biggest in Asia at Lazi, Siquijor

AFTER conquering the best beaches of Puerto Galera and Boracay, the encounter with the Mangyans and rediscovering the rich heritage of the Calapeños of Oriental Mindoro and the Aklanons in Aklan, the "Island Caravan" headed to Central Visayas for its second run dubbed "Tropical Jewels: The Visayan Charm."

Presented by Globe Handyphone in cooperation with the Department of Tourism, "Tropical Jewels" featured the idyllic heritage of the four provinces of Central Visayas, namely Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor. These islands are situated right at the heart of the Philippine archipelago.

Cebu is renowned for its historic sites and rich culture. From the Magellan Cross to the Basilica Minore de Sto. Niño to the Philippine Taoist Temple, travelers also marveled at how Cebu's famous guitars and stone crafts are made at the guitar and stone craft factories on Mactan Island.

Picturesque Bohol prides itself in its world-famous Chocolate Hills. Equally well-known are the world's smallest primate, the tarsier, the Loboc river and the blissful old churches of Baclayon and Loboc. Not to be missed are the angelic voices of the Loboc Children's Choir.

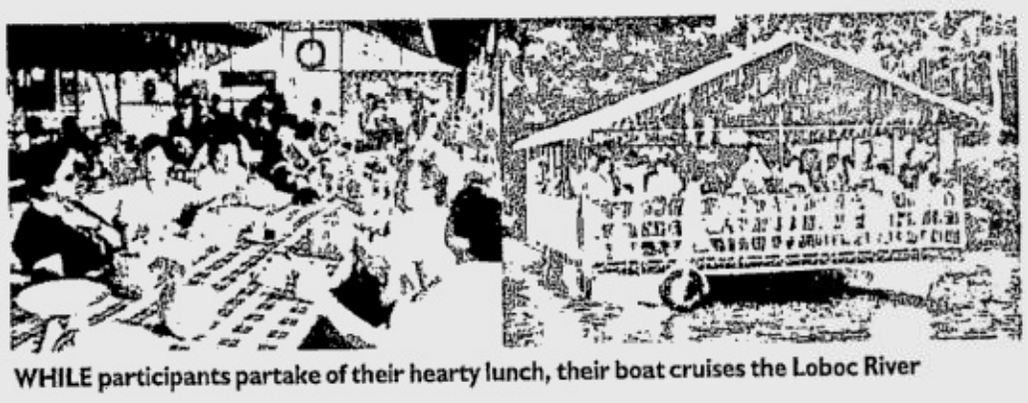
Mystic Siquijor is still clouded with reputations of witchcraft and sorcery. Called by the Spaniards as the "Isla de Fuego", the island of fire, because of the eerie luminescence generated by the swarms of fireflies found in the island, the province offers refreshing sights with its springs and waterfalls and its unspoiled white sand beaches.

Negros Oriental has its breathtaking twin lakes of Danao and Balinsasayao. A protected area now being developed as a major tourist site, the Negrense province is also home to Silliman University, the Yag-Yag street dancers, lush greenery and cool waterfalls and the seaside city strip in Dumaguete known as the Rizal Boulevard where the graduation ceremony was held and graced by Tourism Secretary Ace Durano.

Indeed, the Island Caravan participants were treated to a wonderful journey and delighted by each province's distinctive and natural beauty throughout their five-day trip. The hospitality of the locals and the untiring support of the respective local government units made the travelers truly welcome at every stop.

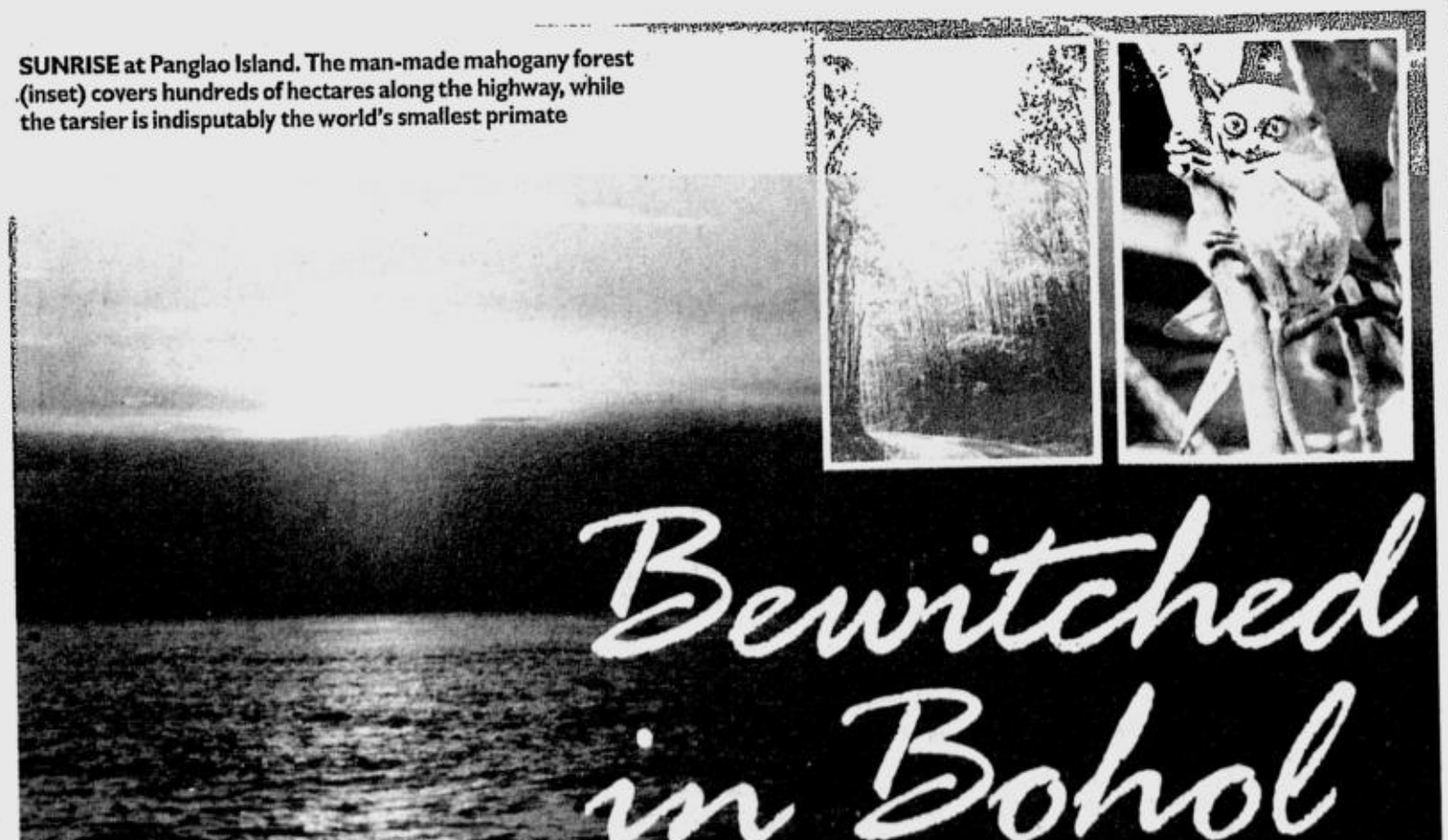
MAGELLAN monument at Mactan Island

FIRST stop was Cebu, where guitar making still thrives



WHILE participants partake of their hearty lunch, their boat cruises the Loboc River

SIQUIJOR Gov. Orlando Fua Sr personally welcomes Island Caravan participants by stamping the province's seal in their passports



SUNRISE at Panglao Island. The man-made mahogany forest (inset) covers hundreds of hectares along the highway, while the tarsier is indisputably the world's smallest primate

Bewitched in Bohol

Text and photos by Joel V. Nigos

EVEN before the tarsier symbolized Bohol and the water rafts cruised the Loboc River, the Chocolate Hills in the municipality of Carmen had already lured tourists to the province.

Legend has it that a love triangle was the cause of the formation of the hills. It tells of a story of a giant named Arobo who fell in love with an immortal girl named Aloya. But Aloya was already engaged to be married. When she was bathing in the river, the giant took her, believing that it was the only way that he could have her. But she died while they were fleeing so the giant cried and cried. When those tears fell into the ground, they eventually became the famous hills.

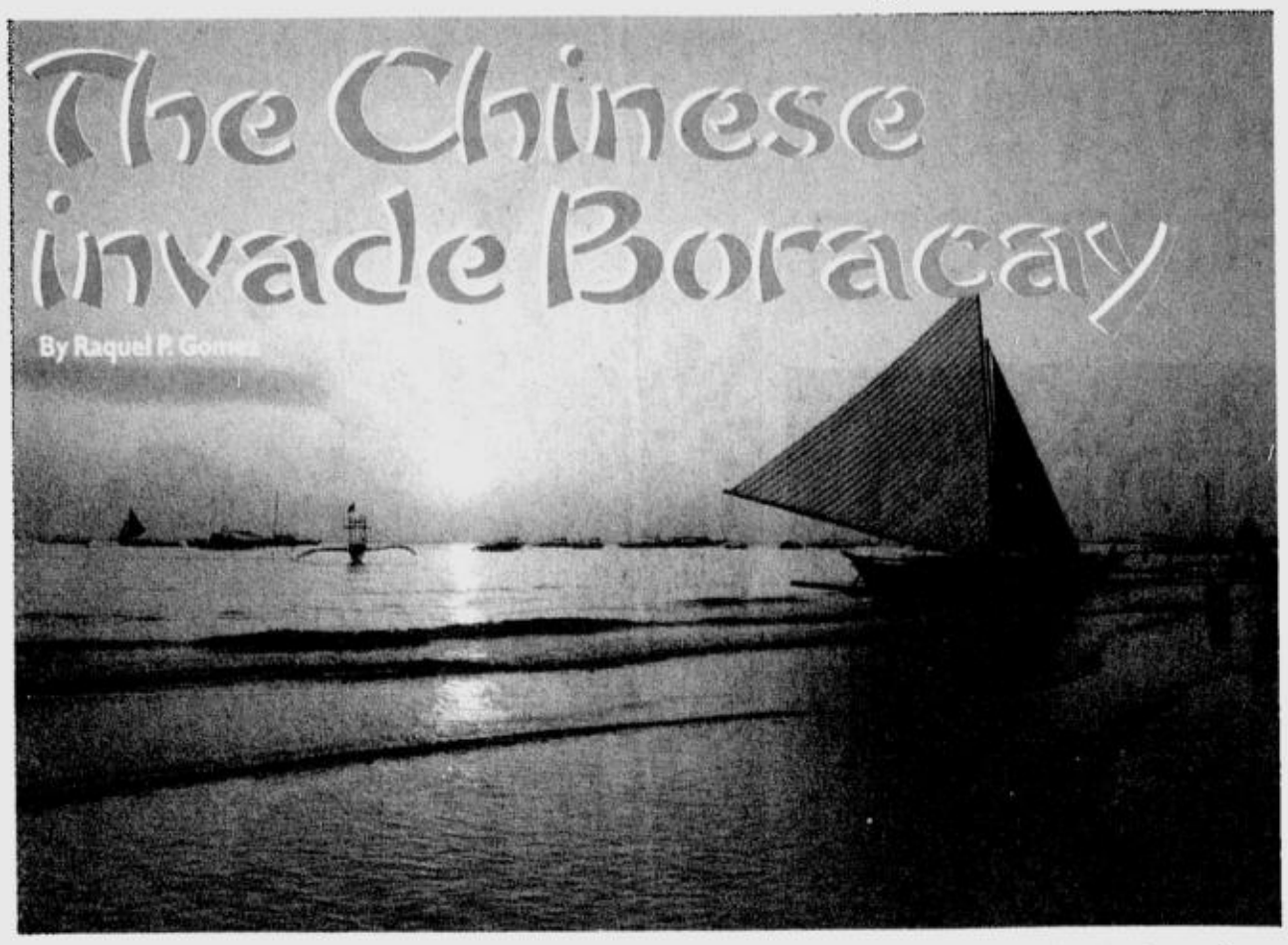
The scientific explanation goes that Bohol was once a coral island that lay below shallow waters. Volcanic eruptions caused the ground to move it up. As the limestone reacted with rainwater, soil erosion resulted, molding those hills as we see them now.

The hills, which number about 2,000, are mainly concentrated in the municipalities of Carmen, Sagbayan and Batuan. Though they all look the same, the actual Chocolate Hills

BEWITCHED/ J2

The Chinese invade Boracay

By Raquel P. Gomez



A big number of Chinese tourists from mainland China have been flocking the island paradise famous for white powdery sands and clear blue green waters.

IF THE flags of the different nationalities were to be hoisted up in Boracay to represent the foreign tourists who go there, the ones that would stand high would be flags from Germany, the United States, Korea, and just recently China.

A big number of Chinese tourists from mainland China have been flocking the island paradise famous for white powdery sands and clear blue green waters. The Department of Tourism's efforts to promote the country to China by opening up an office in Beijing and touring a group of Chinese media and travel agents have been showing positive results.

Jesse Chua of El Sol Tours Inc has been in the business of bringing tourists in the country for 14 years, primarily targeting Koreans and Taiwanese. Now he focuses on the lucrative Chinese tourist market, particularly from Beijing, Shanghai and Xizhuan. The number of Chinese who travel abroad now amount to 55 million a year. The Philippines receives about one percent of that number.

Chua began tourist hunting in China two years ago, enticing Chinese who loved to travel with hard-to-resist tour packages to Cebu, Palawan, and Boracay that cost from US$500 to 600.

He initially brought around 300 Chinese to Boracay and Cebu. According to Chua, they were reluctant at first, "but when they saw the beauty of the beaches, they were captivated." He has since then brought in more large Chinese groups, who usually took vacations for one week during the Chinese New Year and Labor Day.

"The older Chinese like Cebu. The younger ones like Boracay," Chua said of his tourists' destination preferences.

He said the Chinese still would have to take time to get accustomed to the beach life. Many of them experience "culture shock". "The Beijing group I brought was surprised with the way food—mostly grilled—was prepared at the resorts. Some of them, because of their culture, thought everyone in the island spoke Mandarin."

There are other stories, such as some Chinese, upon seeing the tempting sea upon arrival, would take off their clothes immediately and head off into the waters with just their underwear. Sometimes, the strong waves would even pull the undergarments off.

But give them a few more months in Boracay and they're going to adapt to the beach life—just like the happy, suntanned Koreans, said Chua.

THEY conquered the best beaches of Boracay and Puerto Galera and rediscovered the rich heritage of Oriental Mindoro and Aklan. The participants of the first Island Caravan, dubbed 'Island Quest: The Nautical Highway Adventure', pose for posterity.

PANGLAO Island's fine white sand at Bohol Beach Club

From page J1

are in Carmen, those bald hills with no trees or vegetation on them.

Travelers, however, flock to the province now not just for these hills. Though found also in other provinces, the tarsier, the world's smallest primate, has been identified with Bohol. Bohol's old churches and houses also tell of a rich heritage. Panglao Island boasts of a fine white sand beach. And the musicality of the people of Loboc, now being celebrated in cruises down the river, has further pulled tourists to the island.

Bohol is also home to the Loboc Children's Choir, a young singing group which has already won accolades here and abroad.

Panglao Island

Of the 73 islands that surround Bohol, Panglao is the biggest. It has two municipalities—Panglao and Dauis. Both have coral-stone churches. It is where most of Bohol's white sand beaches are located (with more than 30 resorts here) and is connected to the city by two coastal bridges.

Baclayon Church

Made of coral stones clustered with lime, egg white and fine sand, it was founded in 1596 by the Jesuits. The Augustinian Recollects constructed the convent later. It has three altars or *retablos* made of carved wood with gold leaves.

Most of the images or statues in the *retablos* are still original. They came from Spain and Mexico. The paintings in the ceilings were enhanced since being damaged during World War II. Two of the original stained-glass windows are still in place.

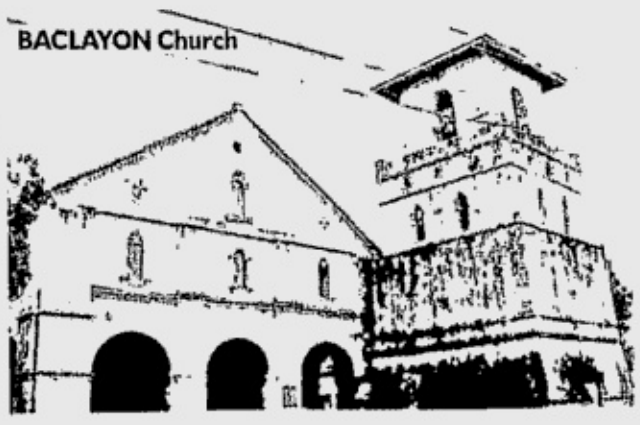
The Church has meter-thick walls that served as the fortress during the Spanish occupation. When the Moros raided, the inhabitants escaped to the Church.

Blood Compact sculpture

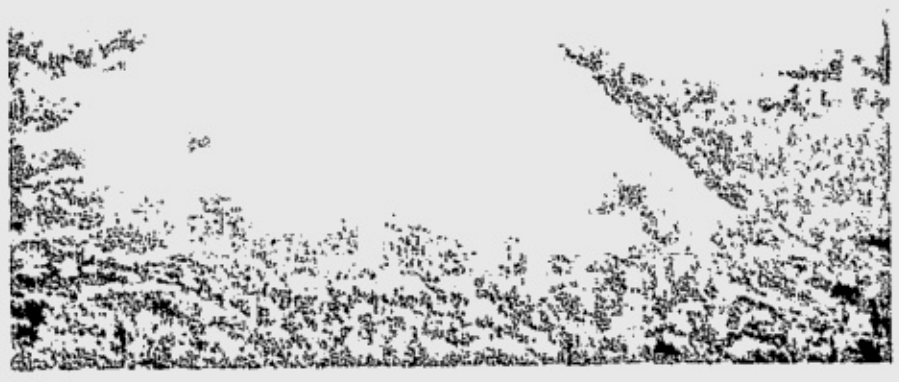
In March 1565, the men of Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi accidentally arrived in Bohol. They started trading with the inhabitants and became their friends. To strengthen their friendship, they conducted the Sanduguan ritual with Bohol's chieftain Datu Sikatuna.

The sculpture commemorating this event was created by National Artist Napoleon Abueva.

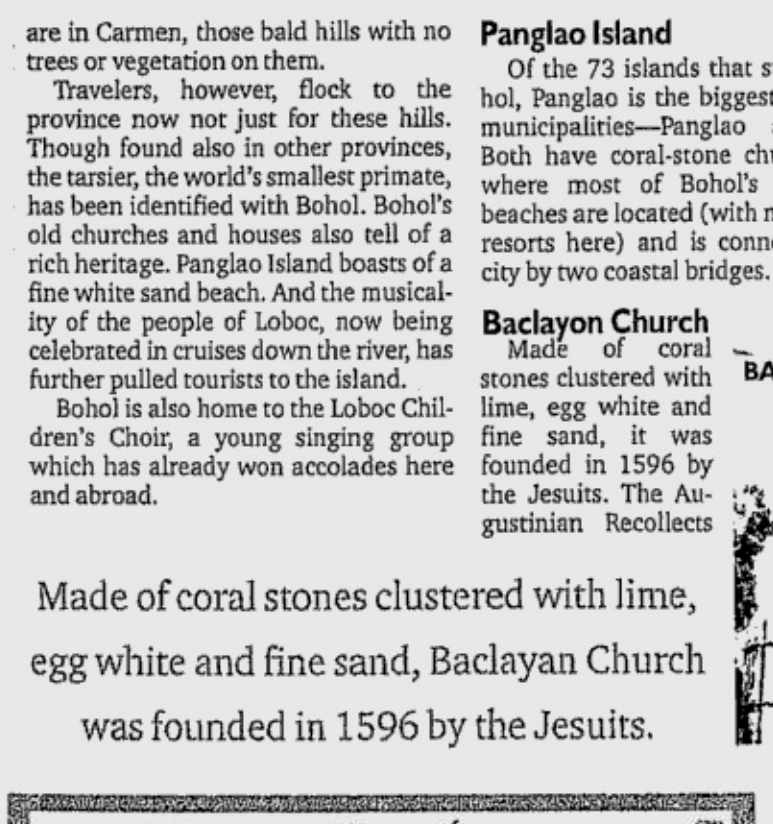
BACLAYON Church



Made of coral stones clustered with lime, egg white and fine sand, Baclayan Church was founded in 1596 by the Jesuits.



CHOCOLATE Hills in Carmen, Bohol



Boxing tourney and scooter party spices up weekend of festival mall patrons

CHEERS and a thunderous applause from a huge crowd of spectators reverberated across the corridors of Festival Supermall's Carousel Court as professional boxers slugged it out on a boxing ring during the Elorde Boxing goes to Festival Mall tournament last April 16.

A total of eight professional bouts, from 4 to 10 rounds each, were held that hot afternoon courtesy of Johnny Elorde, son of Filipino boxing great Gabriel "Flash" Elorde and owner of Johnny Elorde Management International. Johnny Elorde also runs a boxing gym (Commerce Avenue entrance) inside Festival Mall. As an added attraction, Flash Elorde's grandsons, Bai and Mig, also conducted a shadowboxing exhibition to the delight of the crowd.

According to Johnny Elorde, this boxing tournament was not only meant to entertain mall patrons but also to influence the youth to indulge in athletics instead of falling prey to unproductive activities.

Later in the evening, scooter aficionados gathered for a big reunion during the Sagad da Scoot Summer Party and had a grand time as they were treated to a fashion show showcasing sporty, scooter-inspired fashion courtesy of Puma, Adidas and Action Hobbies. Spicing up the party was the superb performance of Orange and Lemons and the Bloomfields, two of the country's leading bands, whose repertoire includes classic hits of the sixties and seventies.

On April 29 and 30, Gameworx, in cooperation with the Darts Council of the Philippines, unleashes its dart clinic and tournament for all dart enthusiasts also at the Carousel Court. Both the tourney and dart clinic will be open to male and female participants. There will be two categories, the classified mixed doubles (1 pro and 1 amateur player) and the Class A and B singles.

On May 14, Anlene will also hold a "Love your Bones" Mall tour at the Carousel Court to help propagate the campaign in preventing Osteoporosis. There will be fun games, raffles and special presentations from invited contortionists and break-dancers. Regine Tolentino will hold aerobics sessions while a prominent doctor will conduct free bone scanning and consultation. Guest celebrity hosts are Mickey Ferriols and Regine Tolentino.

These events are a big boost to the tenants of Festival Mall and a fitting preparation for the coming launch of the Festival Walk in June.

Festival Supermall is acknowledged as the biggest and most exciting mall south of Metro Manila. It provides the family the ultimate fun and excitement by placing shopping, dining and entertainment under one roof with over 600 stores. It is the only mall which houses two supermarkets, two department stores and two hardware shops.

It's mega sale days

on April 29, 30 and May 1

at 3 SM SUPERMALLS

SM Megamall Ortigas, SM City Bacoor and SM City Baguio offer up to 50% savings on great selections.

Mall hours for the big simultaneous sale event on April 29, 30 and May 1 are from 10am to 10pm

THE RAFFLE MANIA CONTINUES!

SM MEGAMALL ORTIGAS

Draw Date: Sunday May 1
Hourly draw, 2pm-9pm
8 winners

8 units
SONY KV-SW29N60
Wega Flat TVs
73.66 cm (29")

SM CITY BACOOR

Daily Draw Dates: April 29/30/May 1
One winner / day

3 units
SYM RV1 Dual
Sports Motorcycles

SM CITY BAGUIO

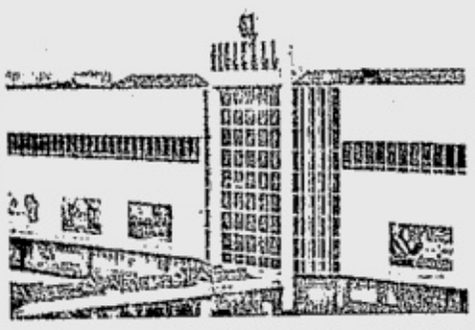
Daily Draw Dates: April 29/30/May 1
One winner / day

3 units
SYM RV1 Dual
Sports Motorcycles

Every P500 single or accumulated purchase at SM Department Store, SM Supermarket or at any participating mall establishment entitle shoppers to one (1) raffle coupon.

Shoppers may enter as many raffle coupons as their individual purchase requirements allow.

SM MEGAMALL ORTIGAS
One-stop mailing destination

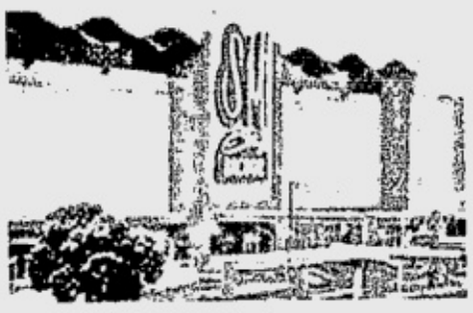


Acknowledged as the flagship of the SM Supermalls group, SM Megamall Ortigas is centrally located in the dynamic Ortigas business and commercial district.

SM Megamall Ortigas offers many choices in shopping and service establishments: appliance and I.T. centers, fashion, accessories and novelty boutiques, toys and game stores, health and beauty stores and many many more-making it the one-stop shopping destination of tens of thousands of mallers on the look-out for great value buys.

Additionally, SM Megamall Ortigas houses luxury SM Cinema, SM Food Court serving native and international dishes, SM Bowling Center and SM Ice Skating Rink.

SM CITY BACOOR
Convenience mailing for a growing community

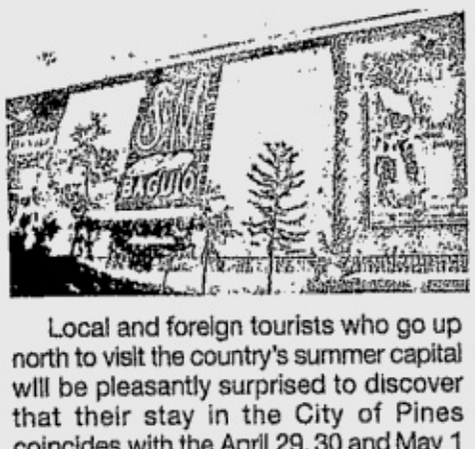


The first major mall to open in Cavite, SM City Bacoor has over 300 tenants catering to the needs of shoppers.

Newly-opened stores include Heritage Time Center, The Body Shop, Dickies, Sabella, Polland Hopia, Krispy Kimpao and DGD Trading.

Soon-to-open establishments include Ashley Kiddie Cart, Lollipop Safety Balloons, Ricad, Wonderland for Kids and Smart 2.

SM CITY BAGUIO
Cool buys in the city of pines



Local and foreign tourists who go up north to visit the country's summer capital will be pleasantly surprised to discover that their stay in the City of Pines coincides with the April 29, 30 and May 1 3-day mega sale at SM City Baguio.

In addition to the half-price discounts on great selections, shoppers are also given the chance to win one of 3 units SYM RV1 Dual Sports Motorcycles in the 3-day raffle event.

3-day sale shoppers get a **free Cheeky Curlz** with every purchase of two tickets at **SM CINEMA**, while a **free scoop of Nestle Ice Cream** is offered with every purchase of P59, P79 or P99 Combo Meal at **SM FOODCOURT.**

up to 50% Off

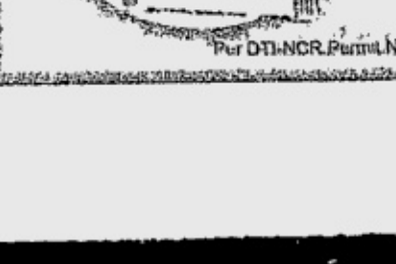
great selections mallwide

3 day sale

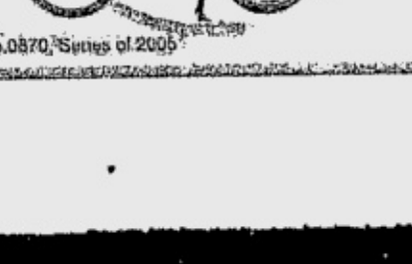
mall hours 10am - 10pm

april 29.30.may 1

SM MEGAMALL ORTIGAS



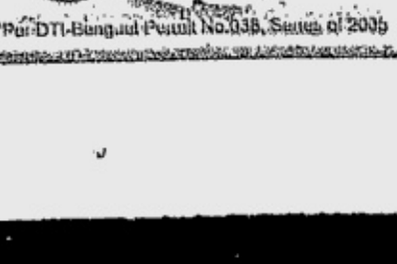
SM BACOOR



Get a chance to **WIN** raffle prizes!

with every P500 single or accumulated purchase at SM Department Store, SM Supermarket or at any participating mall establishments.

SM BAGUIO

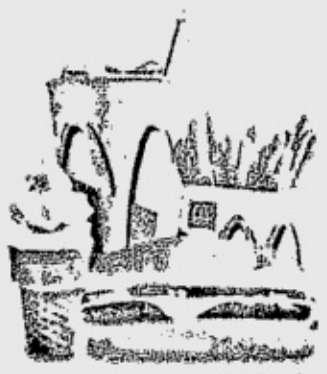


See mechanics posters for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0870, Series of 2006

Per DTI-Bangud Permit No.038, Series of 2006

GLOBE PREPAID BARKADA BREAK with McDo



MEAL 1
Cheeseburger, regular fries, regular drink & sundae cone

MEAL 2
1pc. Chicken McDo w/ rice, regular drink & sundae cone

Mag Globe na & get a McDo meal FREE!

1. Just buy a **Globe Prepaid 128XL, X-treme Memory** or **Kapamilya SIM**.
2. Make your first call or text.
3. Reload at least P25 (Share-a-Load transactions not qualified).You will get a promo text from 2245 within 3 days informing you of the McDo meal you're entitled to.
4. Present your promo text and SIM casing at any McDo outlet (dine-in only) to get your free meal!*

Purchase SIM until May 31 and reload until June 4, 2005.
For details, text INFO to 2245 for FREE.

Join the WEEKLY RAFFLE
for a chance to win a **TRIP FOR 4 to Camiguin via Cagayan de Oro**
thru *Air Philippines*

Inclusive of 2 nights accommodation at Paras Beach Resort, daily breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner and an island-hopping tour!

Register by texting
REG <First Name>/<Last Name>/<Address> to 2245.
ex. REG Tony/Reyes/5 Santol St., Project 4 QC

love ko 'to

*Redemption of meal must be done as one transaction. McDonald's reserves the right to fulfill redemption thru another store or another day depending on availability of products. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2009, series of 2005. See flyers for details.

making a great summer possible Globe HANDYPHONE